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SIR MORTIMER DURAND

"The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best conditioned and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than in any that draws breath."

SHAKESPEARE: "The Merchant of Venice."



"MORTY": SIR MORTIMER DURAND IN 1903.
From a "Spy" Cartoon, reproduced by permission of "Vanity Fair."

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR MORTIMER DURAND

P.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.

A BIOGRAPHY

By

BRIGADIER-GENERAL

SIR PERCY SYKES, K.C.I.E., C.B., C.M.G.

Author of "A History of Persia"

With Eight Plates and Three Maps



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PREFACE

THE advance of Russia by gigantic strides towards Afghanistan was the outstanding event in Central Asia during the nineteenth century, the final step being the conquest of the Turkoman, whose desert territory, vast but ill-defined, marched with Afghanistan and Persia. It was followed by a period of tension, which brought Great Britain to the brink of war with Russia over the Panjdeh incident.

Sir Mortimer Durand was the moving spirit in the Indian Foreign Office at this time, and, mainly owing to his profound knowledge of the Central Asian problem and the statesmanlike views he expressed, a boundary was finally negotiated between the two empires that has stood the test of a generation. Moreover, by removing sources of grave misunderstanding and constant irritation, Durand paved the way for the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907, which constituted a general settlement of all outstanding questions between the two Powers in Asia. This satisfactory understanding in its turn led to Russian co-operation during the Great War.

Of secondary, but yet of first-rate importance, were the relations of Afghanistan with the Indian Empire and the settlement of a satisfactory boundary on the North-West Frontier of India. Here, again, Durand served his country right well, and generations yet unborn will benefit by the "Durand Line" that he negotiated with grim Amir Abdur Rahman. Owing to these two achievements, Durand stands out in his generation as the great Boundary-Maker and consequently as the great Peace-Maker.

He afterwards served with credit as British representative at Tehran, at Madrid, and at Washington.

I have given a brief, but continuous account of British relations with Afghanistan, to serve as a background, and

to make the subject clear to the general public, as distinct from the necessarily small body of experts. Otherwise Durand generally speaks for himself, and the views he expresses on questions of policy in Asia undoubtedly constitute a valuable legacy to British statesmen and administrators who deal with problems connected with Afghanistan, the frontiers of India, or with Persia.

I have gone fully into the question of Durand's recall from Washington, and have shown that it was due to President Roosevelt, who was once characterized to me by a British statesman as a typical *faux bonhomme*. I would invite the special attention of my readers to the definitely expressed opinion of Lord Lansdowne on this subject at the end of Chapter XXIII, where he speaks with the great authority of a statesman who was Foreign Secretary during the first two years that Durand was Ambassador at Washington.

I offer my grateful thanks to Helen, Marchioness of Dufferin, the Countess Roberts, the Marquess of Lansdowne, Mr. Justice Eve, Sir West Ridgeway, Sir Charles Yate, Sir Maurice Low, and Sir Charles Bell, who have read chapters and made valuable suggestions. Mrs. Wilmot, Sir Mortimer Durand's daughter, has placed all her father's papers at my disposal, and has also been an invaluable coadjutor; Lady Durand (widow of Sir Edward Durand) has helped me with illustrations; and finally, Miss Ella Sykes and Mr. F. H. Brown have assisted me materially by reading the typescript and proofs.

My task, which has been lightened by the friends of Sir Mortimer Durand, has been a labour of love, for during the years that I served under, and knew him, I realized that he was not only an official of outstanding ability, but also a great English gentleman, and the friendship with which he honoured me will remain one of my choicest memories.

P. M. SYKES.

THE ATHENÆUM,
May, 1926.

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HENRY MORTIMER DURAND

Born, 14th February, 1850.
Appointed Bengal Civil Service, 1870.
Arrived in India, March, 1873.
Assistant-Magistrate, Bhagalpur, 1873–4.
Attaché, Indian Foreign Office, 1874.
Posted to Rajputana, 1876.
Political Secretary to Sir Frederick Roberts in the Second Afghan War, 1879–80.
Under-Secretary, Indian Foreign Office, 1880.
Appointed Foreign Secretary, 1885.
Accompanied Lord Dufferin to Burma, 1886.
Mission to Tibetan Frontier, 1888.
The Mission to Kabul and the Negotiation of the "Durand Line," 1893.
Appointed Minister at Tehran, 1894.
Appointed Ambassador at Madrid, 1900.
Sworn a Privy Councillor, 1901.
Transferred to Washington, 1903.
Recalled from Washington, 1906.
Contested Plymouth, 1910.
Appointed Chairman, Badge Committee, 1916.
Died, June 8th, 1924.

SIR MORTIMER DURAND

CHAPTER I

THE DURAND FAMILY

The largest part of the power of certain men is latent. This is that we call Character—a reserved force, which acts directly by presence and without means. Character is nature in the highest form.—EMERSON.

HENRY MORTIMER DURAND, whose name is inscribed for all time in the history of Afghanistan and of the North-West Frontier of India, and who served as the diplomatic representative of Great Britain in three continents, was born at Sehore in the Bhopal State on February 14, 1850. He was the second son of Major-General Sir Henry Marion Durand (1812–1871), who for forty years played a distinguished part on the stage of India and Afghanistan.

To refer to the most important events of a fine career, Sir Henry Durand's famous exploit at Ghazni will be fully described in the chapter dealing with the First Afghan War. A few years after this campaign, he served Lord Ellenborough as private secretary and was present with him at the action of Maharajpur, where the party came under the fire of a Mahratta battery at the close range of 350 yards.

The elder Durand's next appointment was Commissioner of Tenasserim, which post he was forced to resign, owing to intrigues by enemies whom he had made while serving as private secretary. He consequently returned to military duty and was just in time to take part in the Second Sikh War, being present at the battles of Chillianwalla and Gujerat.

After this campaign, he was appointed to the inferior post of Political Agent at Bhopal, where, as already mentioned, his distinguished son was born. He took leave home in 1853.

Upon his return to India, after remaining unemployed for some time, the tide turned and he was appointed to the important charge of the Central Indian Agency in March, 1857. Shortly afterwards the Indian Mutiny broke out, and the valuable services which he rendered in defeating the rebels and keeping open the road to Delhi were generously recognized by Lord Canning, and he received the C.B.

Before the Mutiny had been stamped out, the reorganization of the army in India was undertaken, and Colonel Durand, whose fine qualities were now fully recognized, was sent home to act as Commissioner, in which capacity his views carried great weight. No sooner had this task been accomplished than he was appointed to the Council of the Secretary of State for India, on which he served for about two years.

His next appointment was that of Foreign Secretary in India, for which post he was specially qualified, owing to his wide outlook and great experience. Service on the Viceroy's Council followed with a well-earned K.C.S.I. Five years later, Sir Henry was gazetted Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, where, as described in Chapter II, he met an untimely death.

Thus passed off the stage a man of dauntless courage, of deep religious feeling and of astonishing knowledge and sagacity, whose influence on his generation was profound.

The inscription on his tomb runs : " He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God ? " [1]

These words, as his son wrote, he made his rule of life.

The three sons of Sir Henry Durand were exceptionally

[1] Micah vi. 8.

gifted, both physically and mentally. They were tall, handsome and of dominating personality, with distinct literary and artistic gifts. At the same time, a vein of pessimism, inherited from the father, made them discontented with their lot, with the result that the considerable successes they achieved and the rewards that they won were rarely subjects of congratulation among them. The early death of their mother and the absence of their father deprived them of a wholesome family life, and their father's second wife had her own children to occupy her attention.

They were much indebted to the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland (the former was their trustee), and undoubtedly gained their wide outlook on life at Alnwick and Albury, and made many useful friends through this connexion. On the other hand, their father at his death left them each only about £2,500, most of which was expended on education and outfit; and they found the salaries, on which they almost entirely depended, inadequate for their needs.

The eldest son, the late Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Edward Law Durand, the first baronet, was born in 1846. He joined the 69th Regiment at Poona, and shortly afterwards was gazetted to the 12th Bengal Cavalry. But he was not destined to follow a military career, and before he had served two years in India, he was appointed A.D.C. and private secretary to his father in the Punjab. Edward Durand travelled far and wide, and made his mark as an explorer in Western Persia, where he was the first Englishman to scale Kuh-i-Dinar, one of its loftiest mountains. He was pointed out an inaccessible cavern in which, according to local belief, Kai Khusru, the hero of Persia, sleeps surrounded by his warriors. The legend impressed Edward Durand so deeply that he wrote a poem, in which it is treated with considerable insight and imagination:

> Beneath the eternal snows encaverned here
> Lay them to sleep in lordly sepulchre,
> Within the stately crag where eagles nest—
> Safe in the shelter of the mountain's breast;

Toward the end of time a trumpet-blast
Shall wake thy dead, their day of slumber past;
Nay, doubt not thou. Yet, to allay thy pain,
Believe my word, Khusru shall reign again.

Some years later Edward Durand served on the Afghan Boundary Commission as Assistant-Commissioner, and travelled extensively in Afghanistan and Central Asia He was invalided home owing to an accident, and was the first Englishman to travel on the Central Asian Railway, then in the course of construction from the Caspian Sea to Merv. For his services he was gazetted a C.B.

Afterwards he held the isolated post of British Resident in Nepal, where the atmosphere (unlike that of the present day) was most unfriendly. One of his letters runs, "You can get no exercise of any sort, but a walk along a couple of miles of road—and when out no one takes any notice of you, more than of a stray dog, except that occasionally you are stared at most rudely by men who know better. . . . There is no one to speak to, and you cannot go to the hills because of the mist and leeches." In another letter he mentions that the English bandmaster was asked to compose a National Anthem for Nepal, and responded by joining one half of the British National Anthem to a Hindu song. This weird combination was, however, objected to as being liable to give offence to China.

The great passion of Edward Durand was sport, to which most of his energies were devoted, and his "Rifle, Rod and Spear in the East" proves that he was not only a mighty hunter, but also a good writer, with a distinct talent for sketching, of which this volume gives evidence. He died in 1920.

The youngest brother, Colonel Algernon Durand, born in 1854, joined the Central India Horse. He was a keen soldier and sportsman, and after passing through the Staff College was appointed British Agent at Gilgit in 1889. He played a distinguished part on that remote frontier, as described in Chapter XIV of this work. He was wounded, and received the C.B. for his services. In 1894

he was appointed Military Secretary to Lord Elgin, and retired in 1899 ; after which he served as a Gentleman-at-Arms for some years. He died in 1923. Of the four daughters, Mrs. Rivett-Carnac possessed the literary tastes that were so marked in the sons.

Mortimer Durand had the greatest affection and respect for his father. When he was twenty years of age he had occasion to go through his father's papers that were stored in England, to send out his journals of the Mutiny and other campaigns. This gave him the idea of writing a diary, which he immediately started and maintained with the greatest regularity throughout his career. Keeping it absolutely secret, he confided to it his views on men and things with entire freedom and candour, criticizing his own actions and failings with considerable detachment. This full record of the working of his mind is invaluable, and enables me to present the man as he really was. He also drafted some reminiscences. The first four chapters of this book are mainly based on them, and on his diaries; they are, in consequence, autobiographical. Here is the record of his early impressions :

The first thing I can remember is seeing an old Indian woman walk up and present a paper to my father, then Major Durand of the Bengal Engineers, who was sitting in a chair in front of our house. He was at that time Political Agent in the Mohammedan State of Bhopal, and the house was at his head-quarters, Sehore, where I had been born two or three years before. There was nothing unusual in the incident, but for some reason it remained in my memory. I can see the place still, with the old woman in her red *sari* standing out against a dark clump of trees and looking to me rather formidable.

My father held the Bhopal Agency for about four years. The state was then ruled by a woman, the Sikandar Begum, or "Princess Alexander," and the influence which he succeeded in establishing with her had a great effect when the storm of the Mutiny burst a few years later. The Sikandar Begum then showed a fine example of loyalty and courage, and became one of the most honoured Chiefs in India. Many years later, when I was Foreign Secretary in India, the Bhopal State was under the rule of her daughter, the Shah Jehan Begum, a capable and high-spirited lady.

She, too, ruled the State well, but she married a man who gave some trouble to the Indian Government, and I had once to speak to her about him. I tried to do so as gently as possible, all my sympathies being with the Begum, but she turned upon me hotly. "*You!*" she said. "You speak to me like that! You were born in my State, and I remember you as a little *baba*—that high. I looked upon you as my small brother then. And now you come and lecture me as if you were the Great Lord Sahib! Oh wonderful, wonderful! If you had your father's *akl* (brains) you would know what nonsense it all is—utter nonsense—just a make-up of my enemies." I answered, and then tried to turn the conversation by asking whether a fine piece of embroidery I saw in the room was Bhopal work. She said "No, it was not."

"Has Bhopal any special manufacture of the kind?"

"No, it has only one standard industry, for which it is famous."

"What is that?"

"Lies!"

She was a charming lady, the Shah Jehan, but not easy to "lecture."

My father started for England on furlough at the end of 1853, and after spending a few months in London he took a house at Charlton Kings, near Cheltenham. Our stay in town, if I remember right, we children cordially disliked, especially the younger ones, who were fresh from the open air of India. "We always march to the Marble Arch" was our view of town life. At Charlton Kings we were very happy. We were all together, in a roomy house, and surrounded by beautiful country. My father, a keen soldier, was deeply interested in the progress of the Crimean War, and eager to serve. But in spite of his personal disappointment at not seeing service, and his sense of our national folly in not making use of our Indian resources, my father's happiness was with his wife and children. Many memories come back now of long days which he spent with us in the woods, sketching and rambling. He loved nature as few men do, and taught us to love it.

In 1855 my father decided to return to India, and to settle the family for a time in Switzerland, so that we might, while young, acquire some practical knowledge of French and German. I do not know how it happened, but we children went over to Switzerland under the charge of two Scottish grand-aunts. My mother was the daughter of Major-General Sir John McCaskill, who was, I believe, the first of his family to leave Skye. He was killed by a round shot

at Mudki. He had married a Miss Steele of Edinburgh, and these were her sisters. Being unmarried they had decided views on the bringing up of children ; and we, or some of us, found to our unspeakable indignation that we were expected to eat porridge for breakfast, or, as an alternative, sopped bread and milk.

They were dear old ladies as a matter of fact—Aunt Jean and Aunt Margaret, or "Magnet," as everyone called her. We got to be fond of them both, especially Aunt Magnet, who was full of original sin, and always sympathized with us if we did anything evil. I can see her now with her red hair and bright eyes and mischievous grin, and can hear her chuckle as she brought out some little bit of dry Scots humour.

Even the religious instruction I got from Aunt Magnet was characteristic. She asked me once whether I read my Bible every day. I could not say I did, and she laughed. "Oh, I know," she said, "I couldn't endure it myself sometimes when I was young. Once I vowed I would not read it any more, and I flung it across the room under the sofa. But in the end I just *had* to go and pick it up again, and it has been a good friend to me ever since." The story made a great impression on me. I felt, as she often made me feel, that she was one of us really—not a grown-up—and her testimony struck home.

My father left us in November, to return to India, but my mother remained with us for a year. She was a beautiful and gentle woman, who loved her children very dearly, and had all their love in return ; but she was a soldier's daughter and a soldier's wife, and felt that she should be with her husband in India. She left us therefore to rejoin him, and we lost an influence for which nothing could ever make up.

A home had been found for us with a French Protestant clergyman of the name of Dufour, who had married a Swiss lady and settled down in the Petite Vuachère, a house in the vine country to the east of Lausanne. It was a rather formidable charge for a man to take over—seven children varying in age from about fourteen to two—but Monsieur Dufour, a warm-hearted somewhat enthusiastic man, seems to have entered upon the venture with pleasure and confidence. He expressed these feelings to a friend well known among the English community at Lausanne, Monsieur de la Harpe. The old man listened with his shrewd kindly smile and answered, "*Ah, mon cher, tu ne connais pas la verve anglaise.*" I am afraid Dufour found at times reason to remember the words.

Not that we were, I think, a specially troublesome family. The eldest of us, Marion,[1] a handsome high-spirited girl, was always on the side of the constituted authorities. She worshipped my father, and had imbibed his strong sense of duty and discipline, so that, although she mothered us all, she tried to keep us in order. Emmie,[2] a year or so younger, with big dark eyes and an equally high spirit, did not feel the same responsibility for our family behaviour, and had a touch of the rebel in her.

Then there was my eldest brother—Edward—who was naturally the leader in any mischief. A typical English schoolboy of twelve was likely to be rather a handful for a quiet French *pasteur*. He and Dufour had many differences of opinion, and when "old Duffer," as we called him, tried to establish his authority with the help of an *échalas* from the vineyard, he found himself in difficulties. Ned had learnt at Cheltenham to use his fists, and he held about old Duffer the same view as the Chicken held about Mr. Dombey, "it is within the resources of science to double him up with a blow in the weskit." He was doubled up accordingly by a swift right and left which "took his wind," and the relations of the two became strained.

The remainder of the family, being young, were manageable enough. Next to my brother came Nellie,[3] a merry child of eight, with a very quick sense of humour which she never lost. Then I came—a quiet, studious little boy, if I remember myself right. Then my youngest sister, little Fan,[4] with her mother's dark blue-grey eyes, and her mother's gentle unfailing courage. We were inseparable, we two—never had a difference, and always presented an unbroken front to every childish enemy. Finally there was Algy—Bébé we called him—for we, at all events the smaller ones, soon got to talking more French than English, hearing nothing but French all round us.

Nevertheless, I suppose the *verve anglaise* did give some trouble at times. We could not see things altogether as Dufour and his kindly Swiss wife saw them. We resented being fed largely on green vegetables—*verdure* as he called them—and having to go and pick them ourselves in the fields about the Vuachère, especially when they were dandelions for spinach or primroses for salad. Primroses always have, or had at the Vuachère, tiny dark insects in them, which was a horrid idea. Also they were rather tasteless, and it was against our view of the fitness of things to eat flowers. We specially re-

[1] Mrs. Rivett-Carnac.
[2] Mrs. Prinsep.
[3] Mrs Travers.
[4] Mrs. MacGregor.

sented flies dropping into the soup—as if the poor man put them in on purpose.

We remained with Monsieur Dufour two or three years. One day in the late summer of '57, the year of the Indian Mutiny, he took my elder brother and myself up to a seat on the vineclad hillside above the house, and told us of our mother's death. She had been with my father when the revolt broke out in Central India, and after showing great courage she had died in childbirth, worn out by exposure and fatigue.

During this time the sympathies of the Swiss were with the Indian mutineers, and the feeling around us at Lausanne was not friendly. We were denounced as the oppressors of a nation rightly struggling to be free, and so on. The hope that we should be duly punished for our misdeeds was freely expressed, and so far as I can remember, there was not the slightest sympathy for the men and women cruelly murdered by the mutineers, or for those fighting desperately against impossible odds. A child's impressions on such matters are hardly to be trusted, but I know that I felt the most bitter indignation and anger against the people about us.

One evening in 1858, I came to the front door of the house from the outside to find standing there a tall man whom in the dusk I took to be a certain Monsieur Marcel, who was a frequent visitor. Then I heard a deep voice say, "Morty! don't you know me?" It was my father on his way to England after three years' absence in India. He had known me at once, and I had not recognized him. It was an instance of the pathos of those Indian separations, and it went to my heart then with a pang of shame and remorse. In the spring, the younger children followed the three elder ones to England, and our connexion with Monsieur Dufour came to an end.

CHAPTER II

STUDENT DAYS

I stood by the grand old castle
Watching the white clouds pass,
And the still swift rush of the shadows
That darkened the rolling grass,
And the sweet day melted around me
Till the murmuring air had rest,
And the eastern sky was crimson,
And golden the happy west.
Dead were the summer breezes
On the face of the river below
That passed to its home in the ocean
With a silent and hidden flow.
And the deep calm veil of the twilight
Came down on the ancient keep,
And my soul fled away in the stillness
To the mystical region of sleep.
The mists of the gathered ages
Were rolled from before my eyes
And again in its long lost glories
I saw the castle arise.

Lines on Alnwick Castle *by* DURAND.

MY father was on special duty in England, in connexion with the reorganization of the Indian Army. He had taken a house for the summer at Ryde, and there he brought his second wife, formerly Mrs. Polehampton, who had been widowed in the siege of Lucknow.

From Ryde we moved to East Sheen, and there we remained for a couple of years while my father was at work in the India Council.[1] We had meanwhile been sent to school. My elder brother, if I remember right, was for a time at Repton, while I went to a preparatory school at Tittleshall in Norfolk, kept by the Rev. Robert Sayers. "Old Bob," as we boys called him, was an Irishman from Tipperary, and an excellent fellow—hot-tempered, but thoroughly good-hearted and kind to us, though he boxed our ears occasionally. Mrs. Sayers, too, was very kind to us. I remember going to her when

[1] He was a member of the Secretary of State's Council from January, 1859, to February, 1861.

I was fresh from Switzerland, and asking in French for a needle and thread. She refused to give it me unless I said the English words, and I could not remember them. She was supposed to teach us French, and the idea now struck her as amusing, so the difficulty ended in a burst of Irish laughter.

Why I did not go on to Harrow like so many of Bob Sayers's boys I do not know. It was what I had expected. But for some reason or other it was decided that I should go instead to the Blackheath Proprietary School, then under Dr. Selwyn, and supposed to be a rising place. Accordingly, in 1862, I said good-bye very regretfully to Bob Sayers and entered the house of the Rev. R. Drew—the well-known mathematician—at Blackheath. There I remained nearly four years until the spring of 1866, when I was sixteen.

I was happy enough at Blackheath, but I never became much attached to the school. It had no old traditions, and was run on what seemed to me rather narrow lines. The school buildings in the town were poor, and we had no chapel, or proper cricket ground, or football fields, or racket courts, or other things of the kind.

I left Blackheath when I was just over sixteen, from the sixth form. Our family had then migrated from East Sheen, where my father had left us, to Tonbridge, and here I fell in with an afterwards well-known Army tutor, John Le Fleming, to whose care I was soon transferred. Eton House, Tonbridge, was then a small establishment, but a very good one. Le Fleming, a young man of five-and-twenty or thereabouts, worked hard and played hard, and was continually with his pupils.

My great friend at Eton House, and afterwards, was Ralph Neville, Le Fleming's brother-in-law. As boys we were like brothers, and though our friendship was interrupted for a time by Neville going to Cambridge, and later by my long absence in the East, it was taken up again on my return to England and continued until his death. Neville was called to the Bar in 1870, and was for some years M.P. for the Exchange Division of Liverpool, and died a Judge of the High Court.

I was very happy at Eton House for four years, during which Neville and I paid an interesting visit to the Paris Exposition of 1867, and then, in 1870, I passed for the Indian Civil Service, which my father wished me to do. I should have greatly preferred the Army, but he had suffered much during his career in India from the predominance of the Civil Service, and regarded it as the better opening. No doubt it was, and though I gave up with intense regret my dreams

of soldiering, I was afterwards glad to know that my passing had given him great pleasure in the last year of his life.

Ralph Neville was by this time leaving Cambridge to begin his career at the Bar, and as I had to pass two years in England, training in law and other subjects for the Indian Service, we decided to live together in London. His widowed mother made a home for us at 16, Colville Square.

At this time I was enjoying life with the usual zest of a boy of twenty—playing football for the Civil Service and the Gypsies—hearing Santley sing in *Zampa*—and going to the gallery of the Alhambra to listen to the alternate strains of the "Marseillaise" and "Wacht am Rhein," which at times ended in a free fight—eating my dinners at Lincoln's Inn, and skating at Tonbridge, where I was always welcome to a room at my old tutor's house.

In addition to my work for the Indian Civil Service, I had decided to be called to the Bar, and entered my name at Lincoln's Inn. The entrance examination was not at that time a severe one. I remember that when I went in for the history paper we were asked, among other things, to give the names of the kings and queens of England in order. I had written them down when I became aware that a man seated at the next table to me was in difficulties. He turned his paper round for me to see. He had written in a bold confident hand :—

William the First.
William the Second.
William the Third.

There he had stuck fast, and was now looking anxiously for help. It was doubtless immoral to give it, but the case was too pathetic to resist, and I turned my paper so that he could see it. It evidently took him by surprise, but he deferred to my opinion, and I saw William the Third disappear. Whether my friend passed the examination or who he was, I never knew. Perhaps in the fifty odd years since then he has been a great Judge or a Cabinet Minister.

The year 1871 began for me very sadly, for on the 4th January I was told of my father's death in India. While marching round the North-West Frontier, which was in his charge as Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, he had occasion at one place to mount an elephant belonging to an Indian chief. The animal was taken into a covered gateway too low for it to pass through. Getting alarmed, it unluckily pressed forward and the howdah crashed into the roof. My father,

a man of great height, was forced backward and thrown out across a low wall, which so injured his spine that he died the next day.

I had always felt a very deep love and admiration for my father, and I wrote in my diary, "My future seems very black now, and I shrink like a very girl from going on with what is before me. The hope of his pleasure lightened it all, and it seems a weary, unprofitable labour now that all its reward is gone. I fear I have very little of his courage in me. But, so help me God, the world shall never have cause to despise one in whom its best and bravest trusted through good report and evil report." Later I was much gratified upon receiving my father's dying message which ran, "Tell Morty that he has been a joy and comfort to me all his life, from hard work and trying to do my wishes."

Ever since my father's return to India in 1861, we boys had received much kindness and hospitality from Lord Lovaine, afterwards Duke of Northumberland, who eventually became our trustee, and had spent a large part of our holidays with him at Albury and Alnwick. To those who knew him well the Duke was a singularly attractive character. Too retiring and sensitive for public life, he had nevertheless exceptional abilities; and though grave, almost to melancholy, he had yet about him a quiet humour which was very delightful. Above all he was high-minded and honourable as very few men are. No influence and example could have been better for boys. He taught us to ride and shoot, and encouraged us to be manly in every way, but always put before us the loftiest ideals of thought and conduct. His wife, a daughter of Henry Drummond, the banker and M.P., was a strong capable woman, but kind-hearted and affectionate to a rare degree. Both had for many years been among my father's best friends, and now that he was gone, their goodness to me was without limits. It endured as long as they lived, and I can never be sufficiently grateful for it.

I was at Albury a few days after my father's death, and received the warmest sympathy. Henry Percy, the eldest son,[1] had married a daughter of the Duke of Argyll, who was then Secretary of State for India, and at Albury I had met the Duke and his first wife. MacCallam More was a typical Highland chief—self-confident and rather combative, but of great ability and thoroughly upright in character. With his quick, rather abrupt movements, and his crest of reddish hair tossed back from his forehead, he looked like a fighting-cock. The Duchess was a very beautiful woman still,

[1] Afterwards seventh Duke of Northumberland.

and as good as she was beautiful. At that time their family seemed to me the best-looking family I had ever seen.

During the rest of the spring I was supposed to be working for the Indian Service, taking notes of cases at various courts, reading with a barrister in the Temple, studying Bengali and Sanskrit and Persian. But I had done little real work until the examination was close upon me, less than a fortnight off. During that time I worked as I had never done before, day and night, and the result was a lesson to me as to what a desperate "cramming" effort can do. The last night I remember I lay on a couch mugging up Indian law codes while Ralph Neville and some of his Cambridge friends played whist. "It won't matter, old boy," they said, "you're bound to be plucked anyhow. Much better give yourself a rest and cut in." But I stuck to my Indian codes, and my friends were not very noisy. I went in to the examination next morning feeling rather shaky from want of sleep, but very glad the grind was over. An examination after all has something of *shikar* in it, and is a pleasure compared with the working up. I passed triumphantly with a gain of many places on the list and two prizes for Indian Law and History.

Meanwhile London and the country in general were stirred by the risings in Paris, where the mob seized power and established the bloody rule of the Commune. My father's only brother had died not long before while serving with the French army in Algeria, and his widow was now in Paris. In May, 1871, my stepmother received from her a letter which told us that the writer was in straits, for she could not draw any pension, and had exhausted all the ready money she possessed. I was with my stepmother at the time, and we decided that I must go over at once and take Madame Durand some help. Accordingly, having provided myself with a supply of English sovereigns and a leather belt to carry them in, I started next day for town. Ralph Neville of course volunteered to go with me, and on the 4th June, after a little delay about passports, we were across the Channel.

At Abbeville we saw the first Prussian helmets, and from there to St. Denis the stations were full of German soldiers, fine fellows some of them, but short as a rule, and dirty. The best-looking were some light-bearded fellows, apparently Saxons. St. Denis station was an extraordinary sight. Some hundreds of blue blouses nearly tore one to pieces in an endeavour to secure passengers for the most filthy and tumbledown carts. At last we chose one, and with a third Englishman started on a six-mile drive to Paris, with a slow horse and no springs to speak of. Our first venture to secure entrance into

Paris was a failure; but we tried a second gate and were admitted. Then came the tug of war, to get from La Chapelle to the Boulevards. Our driver at last discovered a small fly for us, and we three English crammed in somehow and made for the Hôtel de Baden, which my French friend had recommended. We passed through a scowling populace but without delay or actual molestation, and, at about 9 o'clock, we reached the hotel and breakfasted.

So we were safe in Paris, and there followed some interesting days. Our first duty was to find Madame Durand, which we did without difficulty. During the German siege a heavy shell had fallen on the roof of her house and drilled a hole through from roof to cellar, but without bursting, or killing anyone. She had had to leave the house temporarily, as it lay in the line of fire, but had pluckily returned and reoccupied it. She seemed very glad to see me, poor woman, and kissed me most warmly, declaring I was marvellously like her husband. She had gone through hard times, living in cellars on dry bread, a piece of which I saw, for she had preserved it as a relic. It was hard and coarse, made of sawdust and bran.

Leaving her, we went on to see something of the city. It was a sad sight. The Arc de Triomphe, somewhat injured by shell, had been turned into a barricade. In the Champs-Elysées considerable damage was done, many trees and lamp-posts being cut clean off, houses shattered and pierced, and kiosques blown to pieces. Just beyond the Arc was a monster barricade, a real fortification, some 15 feet high, made of paving-stones, earth and sand-bags.

Elsewhere, too, there were many signs of the fierce fighting of the last few weeks. In the Place de la Concorde were barricades of carts and cotton bales, and much debris of all kinds. The Tuileries were in ruins. In the streets round the Madeleine some of the fronts of houses had fallen out, and one saw the interiors of rooms with dresses and umbrellas and other things still hanging on the walls. The great Colonne Vendôme was lying in fragments on the ground. Here and there one came upon a hasty grave made by raising two or three paving stones, and from one of these graves we saw the toes of a man's boots sticking up. The cemetery of Père Lachaise had been the scene of the last, or one of the last, fights against the Communards. There had been a fearful massacre in it, and near the great pit to the west side the stench was strong.

In the course of our visit we came upon a striking and pathetic incident. Somewhere near the bottom of the Champs-Elysées a crowd of people crossed the road in front of us. Walking up to inquire what was happening, we saw in the middle of the crowd a

woman surrounded by a military guard. We were told she was a *pétroleuse* who had been captured in the act of throwing a bomb. She was a tall handsome woman with a mass of fair hair down her back, very unlike a Frenchwoman, and was striding along, head and shoulders taller than the little infantry soldiers round her, a defiant contemptuous look on her face. They were taking her to the camp at Satory. I asked a man near me what would happen to her, and he answered: "*Elle sera fusillée pour sûr. Il y en a trop de ces pétroleuses.*"

That night we started for England. All went right up to Amiens, where we got out to drink coffee. We were six, all Englishmen, in the carriage. On our return we found our places partly filled by Germans, three of whom had occupied engaged seats. With thorough German insolence they refused to move, even into unoccupied seats opposite, and howled with laughter at the guard's polite request to do so. They had not taken my place, so I was able to sit down, and to show one of them that he was sitting on a cap put down to mark a seat. His reply was to cross his arms and fling himself back with: "*Eh bien! Je vais rester.*" The station being full of men in spiked helmets there was nothing to be done. Happily the offenders got out at Abbeville, so we had not to suffer their presence long.

During the summer of 1871 the attitude of the French Press and people towards England was again somewhat threatening, which fact led to some recrudescence of activity in volunteering. Among others, Ralph Neville and I decided to brave the jeers of our friends and join the Inns of Court Volunteers. In those days the Volunteers had to put up with considerable ridicule, especially from women and Army families, but we were duly sworn in members of the "Devil's Own" on the Bible!

At the end of August, Neville and I attended the Autumn Manœuvres of 1872, and spent some pleasant weeks in camp on Salisbury Plain. We, the Inns of Court Volunteers, two companies strong, formed part of a composite battalion which included two companies of Artists, two from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, two of Hampshire Volunteers and two of the City of Oxford. The whole was commanded by the Oxford colonel, Sackville-West. The majors were Bulwer "of ours," and Leighton the artist.

The Inns of Court had a very efficient canteen, which kept up with us closely in our marches, and was always ready to comfort us with great draughts of "bitter" when we got into camp. This used sometimes to attract men from other units, among them Guardsmen, who were not popular with the men of the Line. I remember

one or two fights between them which interested us much. But these were rare for a curious reason. The British soldier said our beer was too strong; you could not drink enough of it. He preferred thin porter, of which he could take as much as he wanted with impunity.

We privates slept eleven in a bell tent, feet inwards round the pole. It was a pretty tight fit, but after some study we found out, on the second day, that it was possible so to arrange our kitbags and waterproof sheets that we could for the future lie in reasonable comfort. Our tent was selected for commendation as the best arranged and, as I had worked out the plan, I was rather proud of myself.

It was amusing to us to see how our acquaintances among the officers treated us. Several of the boys who had been with me at Le Fleming's were now officers in different regiments of our force and there were others whom we knew. I remember meeting and saluting with careful respect my cousin, Hugh Gough, who had become a cornet in the 10th Hussars. He was beautifully mounted, and very smart in every way, with a leopard skin saddle-cloth and an incipient moustache and a glass in one eye, while I was just a "dog-shooter" padding along in the mud. He returned my salute with freezing haughtiness, for which I took it out of him afterwards. Another day we had been skirmishing along some downs and were lying on the hill-side eating some food, when a party of men and ladies on horseback, among whom I recognized the Duke of Northumberland and a girl I knew, came riding across our front. He asked who we were, and on being told, inquired for me. I was obliged to get up and go up to him, feeling shy, for after a rough morning's work I felt that I was not looking very smart. In any case I was not chaffed too much and was soon at my ease. Before he rode off, the Duke drew me aside and asked me to let him pay the cost of my Indian outfit, which he feared would be heavy. I did not accept, but it was like him to think of it.

We had some days of alternate sunshine and rain, with much mud, and some sanguinary battles, in one of which our battalion claimed to have annihilated the 13th Hussars, who, according to my diary, galloped across our front "within a few yards," as we lay extended along the edge of a wood, where they could not get at us. I was confident that I had myself brought down at least half a troop of them, and did not believe that many of the rest could have escaped. But the regiment declined to be annihilated, and went on fighting, which filled us with a burning sense of wrong. Fifty years later I

had the honour of writing the history of the regiment,[1] but I said nothing then about the way in which it had been destroyed by us in 1872.

The manœuvres ended with a grand review of the two armies by the Duke of Cambridge, which impressed me deeply. The numbers were small compared with the hosts of the Great War, only I think about 40,000 all told, but this for Victorian England was an unusual gathering. We were specially absolved from practising marching past as the militia and volunteers had to do—a great compliment—and the last morning saw us off to Beacon Hill for the march past. It was a tremendously hot day, and we were dusty and warm before we reached the place.

Once there we saw a splendid sight. In a huge natural amphitheatre lay the whole of the two armies, while some thousands of spectators blackened the slope of the down opposite, at the foot of which the saluting-point was fixed. When we were finally ranged in line of battalions the effect was superb. Far to left and far to right stretched the solid red line with a shimmer of bayonets above it in the blazing sun, broken here and there by a sombre mass of rifles, or the grey of some volunteers. Behind us were ranged the cavalry in two lines, the first showing the bright pennons of the Lancers and the gorgeous uniform of the Hussars, while behind lay the whole of the "Heavies," their helmets and cuirasses blazing out here and there as a sudden movement caught the rays of the fierce sun. It was fine to see the Duke of Cambridge and his Staff go down the line. Frenchmen in the old *képi* and blue coat that have swaggered in all the capitals of Europe, save one; Italians in hideous caps; Americans—Austrians—Prussians—every nation under the sun of Europe represented, and conspicuous over all a magnificent horseman of the Russian Guard—a gigantic man on a gigantic horse, his white uniform covered by a gorgeous cuirass of gold, and his head surmounted by a helmet bearing a huge eagle with half-spread wings.

The Duke rode down the lines and so round to the saluting-point, and the march past began. Needless to say the Southern Army with their white bands went by first in virtue of victory, needless also to say how the guns wheeled into line as if fastened together, how the Guards' bearskins were dressed to a hair, how finally we got by fairly enough—with a terrible shudder of dread as the line wavered for a second in the middle at a change of pace just before the saluting-point. Then came two grand charges of cavalry straight up to the saluting-point, which ended the review, and we went

[1] "The Thirteenth Hussars in the Great War." (Blackwood, 1921.)

back to camp tired and hungry, but really satisfied with ourselves and delighted with the splendid sight.

Durand paid a final visit to the Duke of Northumberland before sailing to India. During this visit he wrote the following rhyming letter to his sister :

DEAREST MADGE

The festal party
Have skedaddled one and all,
I'm outside a luncheon party,
And the day begins to pall,
For the Scottish mist, confound it,
Curls about the ducal towers,
And I watch the rustling oakleaves
Whirling down in golden showers,
And a drunken-looking jackdaw
Blown about the gusty sky,
Swearing like the very devil
If there's language in a cry.
Still and lifeless stand the ramparts,
Like a city of the dead,
While the Percy lion wildly
Flaps and struggles overhead.
Snug beneath the dripping turnip
Squats the wily bird to-day,
Though within my manly bosom
Burns the fierce desire to slay.
Yesterday the sun was shining
And the sky was calm and blue,
And we wandered by the river,
Youths and maidens, two and two ;
Wandered on in paths divergent,
Flirted—just a very little—
But the days of man are numbered,
And his joys are sadly brittle.
So to-day the lordly castle
Echoes not the maiden's tones,
But within I grieve in silence,
And without, the north wind moans
But my letter must be finished,
If I don't shut up this rubbish,

And you'll think I'm getting crusty,
In my later years—and cubbish.
As a fact I'm well and happy,
Though the weather isn't pleasant,
And I own I somewhat hanker
For the partridge and the pheasant.
I've had one good day already,
And enjoyed myself immensely,
Though the game cart at the finish
Wasn't crowded very densely.
Still some five-and-twenty creatures
Fell beneath my lonely gun,
And the keeper's at my service,
When this cussed rain is done;
So I still look forward, sister,
To considerable fun.
Now farewell, the shades of evening
Gather round the ancient keep,
And the dressing bell is sounding,
With a summons calm and deep.
So the mist may curl and the red leaves whirl,
And the wind—if it pleases—yell.
But, as I'm a sinner, I'm off to my dinner,
All hail to that heavenly bell.
Just forgive this letter—never
Will I perpetrate another,
And believe me now as ever,
Dear old girl, your loving brother.

To return to the reminiscences:

That was nearly the end of my time in England, but I had obtained from the India Office three months' extension in the hope of being called to the Bar before sailing for India, and thanks to the exertions of a kindly old gentleman of the name of Glasse, Q.C., the Benchers of my Inn allowed me a remission of one term. On the 18th November, therefore, I had the honour of shaking hands with the Treasurer, and being duly declared "a member of this Honourable Society." We dined as usual at the students' tables, but adjourned after dinner to the Wine Room below, where we drank the Queen's health and sang songs. One native of India was among those called, and he sang a song well known in the East, "*Taza ba taza, Nau ba nau.*"

It seemed a remarkable sign of the times for a score of English barristers to be roaring out the Oriental chorus in the old Wine Room at Lincoln's Inn. Now, looking down the hall from the Benchers' table, one sees a very large proportion, if not a majority, of Indian faces among the students.

I spent my last English Christmas at Tonbridge playing some football and generally enjoying myself in the familiar surroundings of Eton House. I then returned to town, packed, and on the 9th January, 1873, started from Charing Cross by an early morning train for India.

CHAPTER III

CALCUTTA IN THE 'SEVENTIES

And dim broad plains, was ever land more fair?
And moon-lit water pools, and here and there
Sunset behind the palms and mango topes . . .
Shall I see sunset on the Kentish slopes?—DURAND.

IN 1873, when I left England for the East, the British dominion in India had reached, or was just about to reach, its highest point. Perhaps it may be well to say here a few words about that wonderful achievement, and about the conditions of the Indian Empire when British rule seemed finally established.

The long connexion between England and India seems to fall naturally into three periods, each distinguished by one dominant feature. There was first a commercial period; then a period of wars and territorial expansion; and finally a period of consolidation and internal progress. Of course these periods were not clean-cut, not exclusively devoted to one object. In each of them there was some commerce and some fighting and some internal progress. But each had a distinct key-note.

Commerce was the key-note of the first, which lasted from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the last quarter of the eighteenth, from the time of Queen Elizabeth to the American Revolution. During that period the British were represented in India by a commercial company, and the welfare of their trade was their primary object. "As our business is trade," the Directors wrote, "it is not politic for us to be encumbered with much territory." Nevertheless, shortly before the American Revolution, the Company did take over, though most unwillingly, the administration of certain tracts in Bengal. From this time they became one of the country powers, and found themselves involved in many wars, which was what they had feared, for the empire of the Moghuls had now broken up, and India was a great battlefield in which various chiefs, largely foreign adventurers, were carving out for themselves independent principalities. Trade became, perforce, a secondary object, even for the British Company; and the key-note of this period, which lasted

not much less than a hundred years, until the suppression of the Mutiny in 1857, was territorial expansion. Vast provinces were added one after another to the British possessions, and eventually the whole of India owned the supremacy of the British Government. Then the administration of India was taken over by the Crown, the Company ceased to exist, and the third period began. The key-note of this period, lasting up to the present time, has been consolidation and internal progress.

In 1873 the third period was already well advanced. The unrest caused by the Mutiny had come to an end some years before, and throughout India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, there was peace. It is true that the shadow of Russia was advancing across Central Asia towards the Indian frontier, and this was causing much anxiety to the Indian Government, with some apprehension among the natives of the country, but there was practically no internal trouble. A fine army composed of about sixty thousand British troops and twice as many Indians, officered by Englishmen, stood ready to keep order within the Indian frontiers and to repel any aggression from outside; and behind it stood nearly three hundred millions of people, now for the first time in their history united under one dominion. Of these four-fifths were directly ruled by the British Indian Government and one-fifth by their native chiefs under British supervision. The people as a whole were prosperous and contented; the revenues, in spite of very light taxation, were large and increasing; and everything promised well.

The administration of the British provinces was in the hands of the Indian "covenanted" Civil Service, a body of about twelve hundred men. They were assisted in certain provinces by officers drawn from the Indian Army, and by members of some other services—the Police, the Public Works, the Telegraphs, the Forest Department, and by large numbers of Indians. These last filled not only all posts of minor importance, but some thousands of offices of superior rank—up to Judgeships of the High Courts; and were admissible to the Civil Service itself if they could pass the open competitive examination by which it was recruited. But at that time very few Indians had passed, and the Civil Service was almost purely English. How well it had done its work during several generations has been attested by many witnesses.

The voyage to India in those days was somewhat slower than it is now and, after greatly enjoying the beauty of the Mont Cenis Pass in its winter garb of ice and snow under a cloudless sky, I was able to spend twenty-four hours in Turin. That, too, was very beautiful,

especially in the evening when the sun sank in a blaze of gold and green behind the glorious line of the Alpine peaks. The train journey through Italy was also made in perfect weather, and when we came suddenly upon the Mediterranean coast the sea stretched away to the horizon intensely blue, unruffled by a breath of wind.

We had a smooth passage to Egypt, and then we steamed away down the Red Sea. The P. & O. vessels which carried Englishmen to India at that time were small in comparison with the great liners of to-day. Our ship, the *Cathay*, though only 3,000 tons, was then regarded as a fine boat. Our cabins were lighted by oil lamps handled from the saloon. It was not easy to read by them, and they were put out early all over the ship, so we spent the night in darkness.

Having been appointed to the province of Lower Bengal, I had to travel right across India before joining; but being in no hurry I accepted the hospitable invitation of Colonel MacDonald, then Military Secretary to the Governor of Bombay, and spent a week with him and his charming wife in their bungalow on Malabar Point. Bombay is always rather hot, even in the Indian "cold weather," but to a young man fresh from England the bright sunlight was delightful, and I remember that I walked to the house, arriving in disorder after an hour's scramble along the seashore, which taught me some respect for the Indian sun. I had a tent in the garden under a big tree, and with a gentle sea-breeze blowing through the doorway I thought India was a paradise.

There I had my first encounter with a native servant. The Sahib's "bearer" or valet had been told to look after me, and to him I handed over my keys. He was not an English-speaking Bombay "boy," but a Hindu from the north with dignified manners, and I was inclined to be afraid of him. The day after my arrival he solemnly marched into the tent, and after a short speech in Hindustani, which I did not understand, he laid down my keys on the dressing-table, and with a wave of his hand intimated that he had done with them. I wondered what on earth he meant.

Evidently there was something wrong, for he looked deeply hurt, and though he spoke more in sorrow than in anger, I knew that I had somehow given offence. So I mustered all the little Hindustani I had picked up during my two years' training in London, and set to work to unravel the mystery. Eventually I was able to do so. In those days watches were still wound with keys, and I had mine on my watch-chain. The bearer wished me to understand that this was treatment not to be borne with by a self-respecting servant. "Trust me not at all, or all in all," was the rule of his life,

and as I had kept back the key of my watch he would have none. I tried to argue with him but in vain, and the matter ended with my submission and the transfer of the watch-key, which in future was lent to me for a moment when required at night, but was kept by the bearer. Evidently he felt that it was good for me to be brought to a proper condition of dependence from the beginning.

After a very pleasant visit I said good-bye to my kind hosts at Malabar Point, and went on by train to Allahabad. All my four sisters had married in India, and the eldest was then living at Allahabad with her husband, Harry Rivett-Carnac, of the Civil Service. They took me in, and showed me something of a part of India very different from Bombay. I spent some days with them and got my first introduction to Indian sport. There was one unusual incident —that walking along a little raised *band* or dam between two fields, I nearly trod upon a large cobra, coiled up and asleep in the sun, which Rivett-Carnac shot as it tried to make off.

I arrived in Calcutta before the end of February, and reported myself at the Bengal Secretariat. My reception was rather alarming. "We thought you were lost," the Secretary said, "and I have been telegraphing for news of you all over the country." But I was forgiven, and appointed Assistant-Magistrate at Howrah, a district just across the river from Calcutta. It was usual to send newly joined recruits to learn their work at the head-quarters of a district, where they were under the eye of a senior officer who knew his business.

As a matter of fact, though appointed to Howrah, I lived in Calcutta, going over every day to my work, but returning in the evening before dinner. There was no bridge then over the Hooghly, but there was a steam ferry, and if for any reason one missed that, there were plenty of "green boats," long light rowing boats manned by natives, which took one over pleasantly enough for a few pence. Arrived at the other side, one got into a *ticca gari* or hired carriage, a rickety little box on wheels, drawn by one or two miserable ponies, and drove through the picturesque lanes of Howrah, swarming with graceful women and delightful little brown children, like copper images, to the *Cutcherry* or Court, where one spent the day.

I have said that the Indian Civil Service was recruited by open competition. This form of recruitment had been in operation for nearly twenty years, and by 1873 perhaps the majority of the service consisted of men so obtained—"Competition wallahs," as they were called. But before the Mutiny the Indian civilian had been raised under a different system, and trained in the Company's college at

Haileybury. Most of the men holding the higher posts when I joined were still Haileybury men. They were of a type somewhat different from the "Competition wallah," many of them, especially in Bengal, our oldest province, belonging to families long connected with India, having valuable traditions and much *esprit de corps*. It was often claimed for them that they belonged on the whole to a higher social class, and were therefore better fitted for dealing with the natives of India, who were at that time practically untouched by Western democratic ideas, and attached great value to birth and good manners. As Walter Scott says somewhere about Scotland, "it was a genealogical country." There was something in this claim. Though a "Competition wallah" myself, I thought the Haileybury men had much better manners than the "wallahs," some of whom were certainly rough diamonds.

Yet the first man in India to whom I learned to look up was a "wallah of the wallahs"—Charles Aitchison,[1] the Foreign Secretary. He was a Scotsman of no distinguished family, but of the highest possible character. Coming out to India at the time of the Mutiny, he had made his mark at once, and had gone on without a check until he had won what was regarded as the blue riband of the Civil Service—the Foreign Secretaryship. When he had first joined the Foreign Office, some years before, my father was holding the post, and though the two men were different in character and training, they soon came to have a strong liking and respect for each other. Now both Aitchison and his wife treated me rather as a son than a stranger, and to the end of my long connexion with them that was the attitude they maintained. I came to feel the deepest affection for both of them.

One thing I remember the Aitchisons impressed upon me strongly. At that time there was a certain want of close intercourse between the official and non-official elements. They did of course mix to a considerable extent, but the barristers and merchants and other non-officials thought the officials gave themselves airs on account of their positions and uniforms; while the officials thought the non-officials were inclined to stand aloof because they were richer. The two sets frequented different clubs, the "United Services" and the "Bengal." To a man like Aitchison it was all wrong. He told me how strongly my father had warned him against it when he first came to Calcutta, and now he passed on the warning to me. "I am sure you will have no tendency that way," he said. "Your father's friends were largely outside the Services, and so I hope will

[1] Sir Charles U. Aitchison.

yours be. Englishmen in India should all stand together." His words came home to me at the time, and even more so ten years later, when for a time there was a serious division between the two sections over the famous Ilbert Bill.

Another prominent member of the Indian Civil Service when I first joined was Alfred Lyall—then Home Secretary. Aitchison and he were in a sense rivals. They were about the same age, and both were coming to the top of the tree together. One was a Haileybury man, the other a "Competition wallah." They were very unlike in character, and neither I think ever fully appreciated the other, which I regretted, for I served under both of them and got to have a strong personal affection for both. And both, each in his own way, were among the most capable men in an essentially capable service.

There were other men of mark, too, in the Calcutta of fifty years ago. Lord Napier of Magdala was then Commander-in-Chief in India. He was a very old friend of my father. They had been together as subalterns of Engineers, and before that, I think, at Addiscombe. Afterwards I got to know him well, and to admire him greatly as one of the most courteous and chivalrous of men. But the first time I saw him he hit me very hard. I attended a Levee of his at Fort William, and when my name was read out, he said as he shook hands, "What! a Durand, and not a soldier?" Though I felt sure he did not mean it unkindly, it filled me at the moment with confusion and shame.

Another prominent member of my service, who had come to Calcutta, if I remember right, as Financial Member of Council, was Sir Richard Temple—a man of immense energy and very versatile talents, who followed Sir George Campbell in Bengal, and was afterwards Governor of Bombay and a member of Parliament. It was rather the fashion in India at that time to laugh at Temple, who was a man of remarkable appearance, and had some personal peculiarities which lent themselves to cheap ridicule. But his talents were unquestionable, and I found him a singularly kind-hearted man. He asked me to come and stay with him, and after a fortnight with the Aitchisons I did so.

He was then occupying a house in Dalhousie Square, where there was a large tank which harboured mosquitoes. At dinner on our first night he noticed that I was in trouble, as indeed I was, for they were torturing me under the table by getting at my insteps and ankles. I told him what was the matter, and he made the servants put something round my legs and feet. Afterwards, when we went

to bed, he came to my room and rigged up an arrangement which he assured me would protect me effectually. There were no net curtains, but there was a punkah swinging over my bed, and he made me lie down, and himself pinned to the punkah fringe a light towel which swept down my face at every stroke. "There," he said, "they can't bother you now." I took his word for it and got into bed, lying on my back and crossing my hands over my chest to keep them under the swing of the towel, but I soon found that it was all quite useless.

Temple was as tough as a crocodile, and mosquitoes meant nothing to him. To me they were maddening. They swarmed into the room from a flat roof upon which my windows opened, and in spite of the punkah, fastened in countless numbers upon my face and neck and hands. Very soon I saw that sleep under such conditions was impossible, and I spent the night wandering about the roof in my night-shirt and a pair of trousers, smoking pipes—pyjamas were not then generally worn by Europeans. After daybreak my tormentors left me, and I got a little sleep, but I was a sorry sight when I appeared at breakfast, and Temple was much afflicted. My bed was then fitted up with mosquito curtains, which he despised for himself, but took much personal trouble in installing for me, explaining to the native servants at great length, somewhat to my indignation, that I was a tender youth just out from England, and required much care on their part.

The following night I sat next to a lady at dinner, who deeply sympathized with me. She told me that when she first came to India, she lay awake expecting the mosquitoes, and when the jackals began howling, she said, "*There* they are!"

Of the Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, I as a newly joined Assistant-Magistrate saw very little, but he seemed to me a kindly man, with a rather shy manner. He had in fact, as I afterwards found, considerable ability, and he was very just and conscientious in all that he did.

Altogether the leading officials in Calcutta, when I first went out, were a fine body of men, well fitted both in ability and in character for the important work they had to do. A century earlier the imperial spirit of Chatham had found no more eager response than among the English in India. The result had been the rapid upbuilding of a mighty empire, based not only on the sword but on justice: and now that empire was upheld by great trained services, military and civil, among whose chiefs love of England and of the flag was not more conspicuous than the sense of affectionate guardianship for the Indians.

Shortly after I left Temple's house, my brother-in-law Rivett-Carnac came to Calcutta on business. He and my sister asked me to join them in a house, which I did, and for some months we had a pleasant little family party, which was great luck for me.

The house was a charming one, looking out upon the open grassy *Maidan* towards Fort William, and from my cool airy room at the top of it I also enjoyed a cheerful prospect over the flat roofs and shady gardens of the European quarter of Calcutta. Of course a new-comer has some little troubles to go through before he makes friends with the climate. As the heat increased I was tormented for a time by an overwhelming desire for sleep, which used to come on after my return from my work in the evening. Nothing can be much more trying than the struggle to keep one's eyes open and talk to people when sleep has fairly gripped you. I fear I seemed impolite to some of Rivett-Carnac's many guests, and once I mortally offended a distinguished member of the Chamber of Commerce by dropping off while he was telling me a story.

The veranda after dinner was cool, and my cane chair comfortable, and I could not have kept my eyes from closing if I had known I was to be shot for it. However, the sleepy fit lasted only a few days while the weather was very hot, and after a rainstorm it never returned. I often suffered afterwards from sleeplessness—a worse complaint—but never from the drowsiness of my first Calcutta season.

Another small worry was one which most new-comers have to endure—"prickly heat"—a fiery, irritating rash which covers the body and makes one's nights almost unbearable. But that also was a short-lived trouble. One night I took heroic measures—had a cold bath, and covered myself with a lather of black carbolic soap, and then lay down in a draught on a bit of smooth Calcutta matting. That acted like magic. Sticky as I was I went to sleep, woke completely cured, and never had a touch of prickly heat again. But for these small troubles the change to an Indian climate did me no harm. In fact I enjoyed it. And I continued to enjoy it for twenty years afterwards.

Meanwhile I see from my diary that, thanks to the kindness of my Collector, D'Oyly,[1] my work was not heavy. I had to try some petty assault cases; but D'Oyly left me plenty of time to read Bengali for my lower standard examination, which every young civilian was expected to pass as soon as possible, and in a few weeks I was ready for this.

[1] Warren Hastings D'Oyly, afterwards tenth Baronet.

Early in April I went to Hooghly, a couple of hours up the railway line, where the examination was held, and I enjoyed the journey through the well-watered densely wooded Bengal plain, which is very different from most parts of India. The examination was not formidable, and after I had finished the written part of it, I had some time to spare, so I went out for a stroll in the garden, which ran down to the water's edge. Here I found a native almost naked, sitting on a narrow spit of sand or mud with a long bamboo in his hand. I asked him in my best "examination" Bengali what he was doing, and he explained to me that his *métier* in life was to stop and push back into the stream the corpses which floated down the river and came ashore in the Sahib's garden. All along the banks of the Ganges, of which the Hooghly forms part, the Hindus commonly disposed of their dead by casting them into the sacred river, which carried them away. In this particular garden there was a little sluggish backwater which seemed to attract the floating bodies, and my friend told me that in the morning he always found several which had come ashore during the night. The Collector Sahib, he said, did not like their remaining in his garden, which was comprehensible, and his duty was to clear the backwater directly it was light, and to keep it clear during the day.

To English ideas it seemed rather a gruesome way of spending one's life; but the work was evidently necessary, and the man seemed quite content in it. He was doubtless a Dom or other very low caste man, and the work, if unpleasant, was light. It struck me that he was spared in one ghastly detail. The bodies always floated back upwards, so that he did not see the faces of his dead visitors.

Later I was transferred to a district higher up the river, and it was one of my duties to inspect the "burning ghat." On account of the expense most of the dead were not consumed by fire. They were carried down to the water's edge when dead or dying, and laid down on the sand with their feet touching the water. The usual procedure was to singe the face of the corpse with a torch of blazing straw, and then push it into the stream, where it was immediately seized by a swarm of turtles and fish, whose movements gave it a horrid appearance of life.

To turn to a more pleasant subject, I see from my diary that in spite of the heat in Calcutta we took hard exercise in the form of football. It was strange starting at sundown and going on till the moon was bright over our heads, the thermometer at 90° or close upon it. But it did one good, I think. It was Rugby football, too, with none of the comparative rests of the Association game.

My work at Howrah was now becoming a little heavier. Our

Deputy-Magistrate, Ricketts, had gone on leave, and I had been put in as Vice-Chairman of the Howrah Municipality, which involved the hearing of various petitions and the signing of countless papers. I remember that by the advice of some subordinate, who possibly saw his way to profit by this arrangement, I had a brass stamp made in imitation of my signature, and used to polish off forms by the hundred, to my great comfort. I kept the thing in my dispatch-box for many years, and trust it never got into other hands and did mischief; but I should be sorry to swear to it.

I had also what seemed to me an undesirable number of small criminal cases to try. Every question of contested boundaries and the like was brought into the Criminal Court by a summons against one claimant for stealing from the other. I made myself as troublesome as possible, adjourning and dismissing and trying hard to make the dodge less successful. But it was difficult to avoid an inquiry into possession. On that hangs sometimes a further investigation into Hindu partnership, etc., until a whole day is spent in trying a man for the theft of a coco-nut. I fear that at this time, with my small knowledge of the language and customs of the country, I was not very well fitted to deal with the wiles of the Bengali pleaders who got up these cases, and fought them before me with much exuberance of language and occasional insolence of manner to the young British dispenser of justice.

The climate was changeable. One night, as we were playing whist in the veranda, a nor'-wester came up. In an instant our candles were out, though protected by glass, our cards whisked off the table in all directions, and ourselves nearly choked with a volley of dust. Then came the rain, and the following day was cool and cloudy —singularly unpleasant to me—but everyone seemed to enjoy the change. The rain brought the country out in a blaze of green and flowers, and the air was soft and clear. As I sat in *cutcherry*, I could see the muddy old Hooghly smiling bright and blue, and every rope of the ships moored along the jetties quivered in the tide below. . . . I could see the numberless kites sailing up in slow even gyrations over the city—or hanging poised in the air. . . . The breeze came in at my window making punkahs an absurdity, and bearing on its wings the odour of grass and flowers and the song of birds and insects—almost as in my dear old England. Calcutta could be a pleasant place at times—even in the "hot" weather.

Early in May I had to spend the afternoon in holding a local investigation into a case of disputed land. I drove four miles in a *ticca gari*, and then had to get out and walk three more. It was

beautiful country—flat, of course, but abounding in vegetation Crossing a bit of palm and bamboo jungle we came out on a large *jhil* (marsh) about three miles by one, overgrown with wild grass and rushes, and bordered all round by a belt of jungle—the tall palms rising exquisitely sharp in the clear air. Here and there lay a large sheet of water, over which flitted gorgeous little blue and crimson kingfishers. A few miserable-looking natives were netting fish in the shallows, shouting over the work as if they were capturing whales. Crossing the *jhil* we dived into the cool jungle again, and walked for a couple of miles through lanes and paths overhung by bamboo and palms and creepers—here and there an oasis where a few men were ploughing after the rain—the grass brilliantly green and the sky above as brilliantly blue—and at intervals native huts half hidden in the jungle, and deep shady tanks—the women shyly turning their faces from us, and herds of small naked children shouting and bolting like rabbits at our approach.

Eventually I reached the field in dispute and assembled the villagers. It was tremendously hot, and I asked a man to get me a coco-nut from a tree close by. It was curious to see him go up the sloping trunk—a short bit of rope joining his feet like stirrups and supporting him—the little dark body wriggling up with wonderful rapidity. The fruit was warm and sickly enough, but it was better than nothing. I was amused to find the tree was in the debatable land, and I could not pay for my drink without deciding the dispute.

Shortly afterwards D'Oyly sent me to distribute the prizes at a school in my district, and I went there with the District Superintendent of Police, a very capable and interesting Eurasian of the name of Reilly. He brought the police boat with him, and as the place where the school was situated lay close to the Damuda River, we hoped to get some alligator shooting, which I fear seemed to me at that time more interesting than school inspections. Still the inspection and distribution of prizes were interesting too.

The school, a low building lying just off the high road to Midnapur, was gaily decorated with flags, and when I alighted from the elephant which had been sent to meet us, and entered the room, the ninety-nine boys rose and hurled a sudden *salaam* at my head while two or three *zemindars* (landholders) and schoolmasters made their obeisances. The master then read a report crammed with fulsome praise of a certain *zemindar*. Then came the list of prize holders and donations, the donors smiling proudly as their names were mentioned in connexion with their two rupees or one rupee.

The boys all read English—the upper classes fluently—but the

poor little fellows in the lowest class were presented with Locke and Bacon and such books, and the most readable book of the lot was "The Pilgrim's Progress." One boy, a Dom, was called up for a prize, and the stupid brute of a master informed me before them all that the prize was given him to encourage him because he was a Dom, the lowest of the low. It is a sign of the times that the others would sit with him on a bench.

Amusing speeches followed. One young landowner started a long tirade which he had by heart, and gabbled through nineteen to the dozen—beginning, "I must say I rise with great hesitation, indeed I am forced to confess to a tremor that shakes the very stages of my frame," and going on in the same vein. So we were manufacturing, even fifty years ago, the class of Indians who are now taking over the government of India from us. When we had got back to the bungalow where we slept, there arrived a *dali* for me from the school authorities.

Civilians were strictly forbidden to accept any presents except these *dalis*, which generally consisted only of flowers and fruit. This particular one was rather exceptional in its contents, but I did not like to refuse it, and was assured by the experienced police officer that I could not do so without hurting the feelings of the people, who meant no harm; so I became the possessor of a large basket containing two fowls, ten eggs, some sponge-cakes and fruit, two bottles of soda water, one of champagne, one of beer, a loaf of bread, and some *ghi* or clarified butter. There was also, if I remember right, a bottle of peppermint lozenges. I believe I might have been hanged, drawn, and quartered for accepting these things if I had been serving under a stern Collector, for the practice was very strict; but when I reported the matter to D'Oyly, he only pointed out that the *dali* was rather a comprehensive one, and that it was better to refuse anything but flowers and fruit. This relieved me for the future of any compunction about hurting people's feelings, and gave me a clear line to go upon, for which I was often thankful.

The next day we were returning downstream, and about to round a sandy point beyond which we could see nothing, when a dull roar came to our ears from the southward, and Reilly who was sitting with me in the stern of the boat said, "By Jove, the bore is coming up the river." As he spoke our six boatmen stopped rowing, listened for a moment and then with one accord went over the side. We were fairly near the river bank, and it was shallow water. Reilly knew the language well, and his first few words addressed to the cowardly oarsmen were a revelation to me. But he also knew their

ways and the uselessness of wasting words on them when they were frightened, so he turned to me.

I had not the least idea what a bore was like, or whether it would be any danger to our boat, but I was not disposed to lose my guns and other things, and when I saw the boat abandoned by its men I naturally took an oar and got some control over her. Reilly did the same. "If we can get into deeper water," he said, "and keep her nose straight for the bore we shall be all right. If it catches us sideways we shall be swamped." That was pretty obvious, and we pulled to get away from the shallow water where the wave might break. But the oars were miserable things, fit only for gentle paddling—bits of bamboo with heart-shaped boards lashed to them—and at my first stroke the blade of my oar broke away. I was doubtless excited and struck too hard. But I got another, and we were soon in deep smooth water. Then looking ahead I saw the bore coming at us. It was still a hundred yards or more away and we had plenty of time, but it certainly did look rather formidable—just like a perpendicular wall of water six or seven feet high, the two ends foaming and roaring on the banks of the river. It came fast, and there was a vicious little curl on the top which I did not like. If it broke as we met it? Well, it didn't. The boat's nose rose to it quite easily, like a horse's head to a fence, and the next instant we were in smooth water again without the least shock or a drop of water on board.

Then we went back for the boatmen. What Reilly did to punish them for their desertion I don't know. What he said I did not fully understand, but he spoke to them quietly for some time, not angrily as an Englishman who did not know the country would have done, but with gentle sarcastic references to their characters and private affairs which made them now and then cry out as if they had received a cut from a whip, and implore him not to go on. One man said he could not bear it any longer, and I thought he was going over the side again. It is extraordinary to see the power over such people that is possessed by a man who really knows their language, and how to lash them with it. Very few Englishmen from England ever acquire the knowledge, or perhaps would care to use it if they did. That is one of the powers and privileges of the "country-bred."

A few weeks later the Rivett-Carnacs left Calcutta, and I went to live with another sister, Mrs. Travers, whose husband had been given an appointment in Fort William. There, in roomy quarters over the Plassey Gate, we were joined by Charles MacGregor[1] and

[1] Later, Major-General Sir Charles MacGregor.

a great friend of his—Major Bates of the Indian Army, one of the cheeriest of men. It was a pleasant "chummery," among all the sights and sounds of the soldier life which had so much attraction for me. To tell the truth they were rather unsettling, and so was MacGregor's conversation. He was by nature a grave silent man, and at that time was under the influence of the great sorrow of losing his wife, my favourite sister, but he had seen much service, and the recollection of fighting times drew him out. MacGregor was a Highlander in blood, and a descendant of Rob Roy; indeed Scott's description of that famous bandit exactly fitted him. The powerful frame and short legs and long arms were all there. I noted in my diary, "He is a thorough soldier and has many a stirring tale of other men's prowess to relate. His own doings were hard to get out of him, but it was easy to see what he was, one of the most fearless men in the British Army."

I remained in the Fort until the end of August, when I received news that I had been transferred from Howrah to a place called Bhagalpur, some 200 miles or more up-country, and my stay in Calcutta came to an end. But for the great sorrow of my sister's death I had been happy enough, and the talk of the other men had taught me something about India. In after years Afghanistan and the Central Asian question became my special life's work, and I was first attracted in that direction by some of MacGregor's stories of the North-West Frontier tribes, to whose ways he had devoted much study. They were devils in some respects, but picturesque devils, and they appealed to his Highland blood.

CHAPTER IV

A TYPICAL BENGAL DISTRICT

Once a ripple came to land
In the golden sunset burning—
Lapped against a maiden's hand,
By the ford returning.

Dainty foot and gentle breast
Safe across be glad and rest.
'Maiden, wait,' the ripple saith;
'Wait awhile, for I am Death!'

Foolish heart and faithful hand,
Little feet that touched no land.
Far away the ripple fled,
Ripple—ripple—running red.—RUDYARD KIPLING.

BHAGALPUR was one of the favourite stations in the Bengal Presidency. The country was higher and more open than the plains near Calcutta, the climate less damp and exhausting, and the natives a manlier race than the Bengalis. There was good shooting to be got, from snipe and quail to buffalo and tiger. And as Bhagalpur was the head-quarters both of a district and a division, there was more European society than in most country stations.

In India, I may explain, the district was the unit of British administration. It was ordinarily a tract of country the size of a large county in England, with a population of a million or so. It was ruled by a British officer, the "Magistrate" and "Collector," with the help of a British Superintendent of Police, and one or two young British Assistant-Magistrates, supported by a considerable number of native officials. Three or four such districts formed a division, which was the charge of a "Commissioner," and four or more divisions made up a province under a "Lieutenant-Governor." Such, with some local modifications, was the simple structure of the British administrative system under which a few hundred Englishmen, aided by a larger number of Indians, governed more than two hundred millions of men. Sixty or seventy millions more had been left under the rule of their native chiefs, supervised by the British

Government, which consisted of a " Viceroy and Governor-General " with a Council of half a dozen senior British officials.

So well was the system working when I went out to India that immense as the country was, and few as were its British rulers, the district officers of Bengal, our oldest province, were not overworked. The great machine had been set up there a hundred years or so before and was now running so smoothly that unless something unusual occurred, such as a failure of the rains, and therefore of the crops, the white men in control of a district had a fairly easy and pleasant time.

I arrived in Bhagalpur in September, 1873, after a rainy but enjoyable night in the train. My diary notes that " the palms and the dark bamboo jungles were one blaze of fire-flies," and in the morning, when I looked out upon the sheets of water by the side of the line, I saw to my satisfaction some snipe among the snippets and kingfishers. This promised sport, and altogether my first impression of my new station was cheering. The morning air was delicious—like taking a cold bath, after Calcutta—and I was young, with all the world before me. As I sat in the dak bungalow waiting for breakfast, and looking at the long lines of Indian women in their graceful white *saris*, with water-pots poised on their heads, going down to the bank of the Ganges, which rolled by in full flood with a blue glint on its muddy waves, I thought India a beautiful country and my lot in life an enviable one.

After breakfast I went off to call on my new chief, the Magistrate of the District. Bhagalpur naturally brought to one's mind *Vanity Fair* and the immortal Collector of Boggley Wollah. How Thackeray ever came to perpetrate that dreadful caricature I do not know. Certainly there was nothing of Jos Sedley in my new Collector, Villiers Taylor. A tall and remarkably handsome man, with pleasant manners and a ready laugh, he was at the same time a capable district officer—cool and self-possessed and manly—an excellent example of the Haileybury civilian. He received me in a room off his court, chaffed me a little, as the Haileybury men were apt to chaff the " Competition wallahs," who were supposed to come out with rather lofty views of life, told me I should find my work very light, and then talked to me about the people in the station, and made out a list of calls for me.

As an example of what the European population of a Bengal station was in those days, I may as well give a short account of them. First there was the Commissioner, George Barlow, who was in charge of the four or five districts forming the division. Barlow was a

Haileybury man like Villiers Taylor, and one of the cheeriest fellows I ever met. He had distinguished himself early in life, and had gained rapid promotion, but was in no way spoilt by success—always full of fun and *joie de vivre*. He told me the life of an Indian district officer was the best life a man could possibly have, and that the Commissionership of Bhagalpur was the very best appointment in the Service. He had married a very charming woman, whose sister, Lady Ulick Browne, afterwards Lady Sligo, I had already met in Calcutta. Next to Barlow in official rank was the Judge of the division, John Lowis, also a Haileybury man. He and his wife were beloved by everyone, and deserved to be.

Then there was the civil surgeon, Dr. Baillie, who with his sister occupied a third house. Baillie had much work of various kinds in the district, and looked after all of us in the station. We had a church in Bhagalpur, and an excellent clergyman, Haden, a pleasant merry fellow, whom everyone liked. There were two jails in the place, a district jail generally containing three hundred prisoners, and a large central jail. The Superintendent of the Jails, Dr. Lethbridge,[1] who afterwards became a distinguished official under the Government of India, was as kind and helpful to all about him as he was capable in his work. He lived with the Padre Sahib and a young civilian, Badcock, also an excellent fellow and good at his work, in a bachelor establishment generally known as the Monastery. In a bungalow, not far from the Monastery, lived the District Superintendent of Police, Colonel Gordon, with his wife, a very friendly couple always to the fore in any fun that was going. Finally there was a very large house in the centre of the station occupied by some pleasant people of the name of Sandys. The head of the household, Teignmouth Sandys, had been a civilian and Judge, but had retired. He belonged to an old Northumberland family which had been settled for centuries on the Cornish coast near St. Keverne, but he preferred the life in India to the rather solitary home of his people. He had with him his wife and two unmarried daughters.

This completed the European community of the civil station. A couple of miles away was the military station, in which was quartered a single regiment, the 4th Native Infantry, under British officers. Owing to the distance between the two sections of the station, and to the difference of work, the lives of the soldiers were more or less separate from ours in the civil station, but there was of course much coming and going between the two, and frequent interchange

[1] Sir Alfred Swaine Lethbridge.

of hospitality. The European population of Bhagalpur therefore, at the end of the hot weather, when its numbers were smallest, still mustered nearly a dozen white men and as many ladies, enough for some social intercourse and simple amusements, so we were better off than most country stations in India. We were all on good terms with each other; and certainly in the civil lines, where we were thrown together daily, it was almost like one large family. Many of the friendships formed there were very warm, and endured to the end of our lives.

I may mention here that going out to India had with many men a rapid effect in loosening, if not in broadening, their religious views. For instance, surrounded by millions of people who had no belief in Christianity at all, it was difficult to retain for long any strong interest in the differences of belief between various Christian sects, and other more serious matters were apt in time to lose some of their importance. I do not think the effect was altogether evil. It is also true, and not incomprehensible, that with other minds India seemed to crystallize religious belief and to produce a peculiarly striking brand of Christian. Among well-known men, conspicuous examples were Henry Lawrence and Lord Napier of Magdala, and my father was of the same type. Their Christianity seemed to be broadened by contact with India, but withal to grow rather deeper than shallower. Like them, many of the school were soldiers, and singularly fine soldiers. Indeed, about the middle of the nineteenth century, this centurion type was to be found in every Indian cantonment.

The large Indian population of the town and district, about two millions, lived practically apart. Of the native officials, landholders, and other principal residents, a few, very few, joined us occasionally at badminton or lawn tennis or a garden party—and at intervals one of them might give an entertainment of some kind—a *nautch* or fireworks—to which the English people were invited; but, as a whole, there was little social intercourse between the races. The bulk of the natives were Hindus, and their caste did not allow them to eat with us. This, however, did not prevent rulers and ruled from seeing and knowing a good deal of each other, for they met constantly in court and office and town. Also the British officials were frequently in camp, where they became acquainted with Indians of every class, from the raja with his broad acres to the peasant in the outlying villages and the worker in the indigo factories which supplied the chief industry of the district. All alike looked to the sahibs as their protectors against violence or fraud, their advisers in

every sort of trouble, and with many of them the sahibs were on very friendly terms.

When I had made acquaintance with the people at head-quarters, I found that the life was an easy and pleasant one. The custom with most of us was to get up early, about five o'clock, and go for a ride in the cool morning air, or a walk after partridges. These were not numerous, but we got exercise, and birds enough to keep us keen. They were of course, not preserved, but there were almost always a few to be found on the edges of the crops and in broken places, with here and there a snipe or two near the patches of water. If one rode, the country was open in all directions, and there was a pleasant little race-course—so called—a flat, grassy plain with a clump of palms in the centre, where my "waler," or Australian horse, could get a good gallop. Here I sometimes found one or two of the ladies taking a morning canter too. We used to ride back together as the sun began to grow warm, and sometimes I dismounted at the big Sandys house and had *chota hazri*—little breakfast—with the rest of the family in the broad south veranda. Then I rode on home for the morning bathe and real breakfast.

After this there was an hour or two's work in court trying cases and receiving petitions, some of which were full of unintentional humour. For instance, one disappointed man compared himself to a melancholy monkey sitting on a solitary palm tree in the desert. Another man wrote that while riding in haste to carry out my orders he had "gone to earth" twice, and was being dosed with jalap as a cure, and so excused himself from personal attendance in court. But the most delightful of the many letters that came under my notice merits quotation in full:

> "From a long time being in a great negligence I wrote no humble letter to Your Honour, though I heard and knew all about your merciful temper. Now I put aside my habit of forgetfulness and being contrary to it, write some excellent and sweet words into a few humble passages, in order to send it up for your kind Honour.
>
> "Once while I wished to pen a bit of paper I found that Your Honour had proceeded on absence, and on hearing such a news my pen was kept back from the act. I decidedly expect that I would be obliged with an answer to my letter, which will bestow verdure on the withered garden of my luck and cause it to produce the beautiful flowers, seeming bloomed in a comely manner as it turns out in the season of flower by blowing the zephyr.

> "Now my humble abilities do not allow me to proceed further in your Honour's address. I feel myself at a risk to express my requests any more than those which I wrote above."

After the day's work was finished one got into flannels and drove off to the racket court among the palm trees, or, on "ladies' days," to the recreation ground near the river, where the whole station gathered for badminton and tennis, and stayed till the swift Indian darkness had fallen and the evening grew chilly. Then there was lighting of carriage lamps and a dispersion in various directions—often to meet again at some friendly dinner-table where everyone knew everyone else well, and there was much chaff and fun as the champagne went round. Fifty years ago we had not yet been hard hit in India by the fall in silver, and everyone was fairly prosperous, and lavish hospitality was the rule. But we had usually been out of bed since sunrise, so there were no late hours. It was a merry, pleasant life, and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

One day I went over the district jail with Lethbridge. It was very interesting. I saw working away at a handmill the huge police head constable I lately sentenced (for extorting money from villagers), and realized for the first time what hard labour means out here. Poor devil, he looked daggers at me. It was curious to see "two women grinding at a mill"—everything unchanged for ages. The men all sleep on raised mud beds with a head-piece, and eat together in the central court at long mud tables some six inches off the ground. All very neat and orderly. Lethbridge told me there was no crime or disturbance. He had 300 men and they gave no trouble. These people are wonderfully tractable, it seems. During the last cholera panic they were camped out and not a single man attempted to escape.

I was not destined to spend the entire cold weather at Bhagalpur. The rains had been insufficient during the summer, and, as Sir George Campbell was apprehensive of a failure in the food crops, I was ordered into camp at a few hours' notice with Taylor, to report on the crops, of which my knowledge was minute.

Our first march began on a trolley pulled, or pushed rather, by coolies who ran along the rail behind. It is a pleasant way of getting over the ground, the pace being often fully ten miles an hour. We passed through a swampy country for some three miles—abounding with duck and other game—then got out and walked towards our camp, where we found our tents pitched in the sun but near a small clump of palms.

The country round about was in its peculiar way a beautiful one. A plain of brown grass as high as your horse's withers—with great silent meres at intervals, full of wild fowl of every description. As you ride you hear no sound but the cracking of the ripe grass seeds on either hand, or the distant rustle of some birds' wings far away in the cloudless sky. Now and then comes a hoarse cry from the air above, and long waving lines of pelicans stream overhead towards some favourite piece of water. Small rivers, half dried up at this season of the year, wind about the country in all directions and afford a livelihood to innumerable paddy birds and a few owners of fisheries. They teem with birds of all kinds. Herons and snail-eaters stalk about the shallows. Fish eagles soar above. Beautiful terns with a plumage of exquisitely tender French grey—scarlet-footed and yellow-breasted—wander slowly over the face of the water, and brilliant kingfishers cleave the air in hundreds, white and crimson and blue, glittering like jewels in the sunlight, and dropping now and then like stones on the water while the spray flies high over them. The grass plain stretches as far as the eye can reach on all sides—a few blue clumps of mango or palm lie shimmering through the haze in the distance—and little mud villages rise up, picturesque and dirty, on every mound that breaks the dead level.

Starting early again next morning we walked some miles to a different sort of country, brushing up the loose stoneless earth like snow. To our right was a boundless plain of rice land, brilliant green and dotted with palms. To our left the long low range of the Sonthal Hills, scarcely to be distinguished from the sky. That was of course without a fleck of cloud—blue and merciless. Here and there a huge vulture soared in great sweeping circles over our heads. It was very beautiful—with the beauty of the sea, solitude and infinity—no noise but the somnolent hum of the insects in the grass, and now and then a chorus of quick cries from a long line of cyrus birds coming down to us through an incalculable distance from the dazzling sky above. We mounted our elephants to cross a river, and so finished our march. Our tent was pitched in a shady mango *tope* full of bright green fly-catchers and cooing doves. Here all seemed very promising, when to our dismay Taylor was recalled to meet Campbell and left immediately on the elephant. Such is life.

Early the next morning I obtained another elephant and started off on an execrable march along paddy *bands* the whole way. I was interested by seeing for the first time a thing I have heard described in England. I was marching north on my elephant, and my shadow

fell right across on the tops of the rice which was loaded with a heavy dew. All round my head glistened a brilliant halo like a moving coruscation of silver—so brilliant that it startled me at first. Altogether the life was full of novelty and pleasing. The queer rambling villages, with creeper-covered mud huts and its numberless cattle and goats; the ring of staring natives, the shy graceful women peeping from behind their *saris*, and the hundreds of cheerful naked children, picturesque groups round the big white men with their pith hats and guns.

The village schools interested me. The boys seemed to learn surprisingly fast in their own way. They do not begin by reading as with us, but immediately a child goes to school he is given a lump of chalk and made to write out his letters on the clay floor. Afterwards he is promoted to writing on a blackened board with ink made of chalk and water. Their crooked letters are far more difficult and numerous than ours, and far more alike. It is curious to notice a little fellow just beginning. You see a little black creature with enormous eyes squatted on the mud floor dashing away freely at his letters with a bold draughtsman's touch, swiftly rubbing out the faulty ones with his pencil hand and chalking in again with perfect freedom and want of restraint.

I spent two or three days at a small indigo factory, managed by two young Scottish assistants, brothers of the name of Landale, who were most helpful to me. Poor boys, their lives seemed very dull and comfortless. The rooms they lived in were almost unfurnished, and they had nothing but the barest necessities of life. Their library consisted of one book, an anthology of verse which I found on the floor in a corner, covered with dust and without a binding. They received from the head factory a weekly supply of bread and tea, and from their very small pay of about £60 a year they could buy a certain quantity of meat, chiefly kids' flesh and water birds. They never tasted alcoholic drink of any kind, nor had any amusement except a little shooting when they possessed cartridges for their one very ancient gun. They were wholly without newspapers and had never heard of the fall of Paris. Some rumours of the war of 1870 had reached them, but they thought the French had given the Germans "an awful licking."

Of course this was not a fair sample of the life led by indigo planters in general. The boys were young and perhaps unusually careless by nature, and the place was out of the way. But it was an instance of what the life could be in unfavourable conditions, and it made a deep impression on me, the more so because one of the brothers

was a capable fellow, and the book in his house was an old school prize.

Close to the factory we visited a curious fishery, for which the worker told us he paid Rs. 450 yearly. The stream, a small muddy channel about five-and-twenty feet across, was dammed just after a sharp turn and pushed into a sort of mud funnel, the thin end of which was enclosed and overlapped by a well-built framework of cane—the water pouring out in a small cascade on to the smooth floor, and of course going through and away, while every fish two inches long was left on the canes. The thing was very simple and effective—as attested by the big heap of fish left in the basket.

Another form of sport was spearing fish, at which some of the natives were very clever. The river which ran by the factory was beautifully clear, and one could see the fish well. The game was to take a dug-out and have it paddled along slowly from the stern, while the spearsman stood on the little platform at the bow. The spear consisted of a bamboo shaft, the head surrounded by a number of small pointed canes which opened out as one struck or threw, and gave one a better chance of hitting. When the fish were big a skilful spearsman would often use the bamboo shaft by itself with a pointed iron tip and no canes, but this was rather "swank." The great difficulty I found was to keep one's balance on the small platform and avoid being jerked off into the water. The natives constantly fell in, but as they were practically naked and swam well this did not matter to them. I did not get a ducking, but had several narrow escapes and did not take very keenly to the spearing.

I was much interested in the way native fishermen caught wild duck. They were not easy to shoot, being very wideawake, yet the men managed to catch plenty. They planted upright bamboos in the sheets of shallow water, and connected them with lines of hanging nooses, a simple device but seemingly successful, for every night large quantities of birds hanged themselves in the darkness. The nooses were made of horsehair and hung on light ropes. The duck, which were in great numbers, used to fly backwards and forwards over the marsh before settling, and run their necks into the nooses at full speed. It was at first difficult to believe, but there could be no doubt, for if one went out very early in the morning one saw the natives taking the dead duck off the lines of nooses; and the number caught was so great that I found I could buy them much cheaper than I could shoot them.

While on tour I received much help and hospitality from the young Raja of Soubursa, whose house was close by. I found him

pleasant and gentlemanly. He was a Rajput, and rode a magnificent Arab very well. He kept a good stud of Arabs and walers, several elephants, forty quasi-soldiers, and twelve horsemen, who served as insignia of his rank. Those small landed chiefs were to be found all through the countryside. With their soldierly and sporting instincts they were the natural allies of the district officers, and their influence among the people was of great value.

I remember that my first introduction to the Raja was rather humiliating. He had invited me to dinner, and sent a horse for me to ride over to his house. Not liking to dine in boots and breeches, I had put on a black coat and a pair of thin nankeen trousers, the only change I had in camp. As I dismounted in his courtyard before the front steps, the trousers parted with an audible sound of ripping, and before my formal reception I had to be sewn up in a corner of the veranda by the native tailor. The merry young Raja was doubtless amused by the incident, but nothing could have been more quiet and tactful than the way he took it.

Afterwards, when we went in to dinner, which the Raja's caste did not allow him to share, it struck me that my soup tasted very rich, and on examination I found that it consisted of a tin of *pâté de foie gras* which had been boiled and turned out. This was rather alarming, but I did not like to show any surprise, so my Scotch planter friend and I each polished off a plateful, and a glass of port which had been served with it, and proceeded to other things. It was a colossal dinner altogether, for the Raja was very hospitable. But neither of us was a penny the worse for it.

The next day Taylor returned. We spotted two alligators lying on a sand-bank near one of the rocks, and determined to have a shot, as I had brought some ball cartridges in case we saw them. We made a long detour and came up under the rock as quietly as possible with the view of landing and stalking the beasts. To our vexation, though the thing was so ludicrous that it made me ache and cry with laughter, one of our boatmen dropped into the water with a loud splash just as we were going to disembark. He was sitting on the flat bow of the boat, and his long bamboo oar got caught in a rock and he caught a crab, being fairly forced over the bows into the water. We scrambled on shore, and over the rocks to an opening opposite the sand-bank, and found our two beasts lying quiet and unsuspicious. It was a sweet pot. Taylor chose a large one which was lying broadside on—his huge ridged back standing full three feet off the sand. Mine lay rather nearer, about eighty or a hundred yards, with his head towards me. Taylor gave the word

—one, two, three—and we blazed away simultaneously. He had overestimated the distance and his bullet went over the beast. Mine being almost a point-blank shot was easier, and my ball lodged in the left shoulder. The animal writhed and swung round, and managed to roll into the water before we could get up to the place, which was a sell; but he turned up dead very soon.

I was astonished to hear one little crocodile which Taylor shot, crying on the bank like a human being. I never before heard one make a sound. The cry was singularly child-like, a long drawling *ma ma*, repeated over and over again, and I shouldn't wonder if this same cry was the foundation for the time-honoured nursery story of the crocodile weeping on the Nile.

There was not much sport in shooting these beasts, but they raided the village cattle at the fords, and sometimes killed a woman or a child; so the natives always implored us to shoot as many as we could, and I used to kill them whenever I got a chance.

I cut them open when dead to see what they had been feeding on. I used to find remains of fish and water-snakes, and occasionally bullock's feet or other remains of cattle, but I never found any bangles or other things to indicate that the animal had attacked human beings. Undoubtedly they did so at times. A police officer once told me that while watching a village ford which was infested by a man-eater he had seen a woman seized and dragged under. The alligator rose immediately afterwards in deep water with the woman between his jaws and shifted his hold on her body. She was still alive and screamed. My friend fired and hit the beast, which dropped the woman and sank. She was actually rescued, but had been badly bitten about the waist, and, whether from that or the shock, she died almost immediately. It never happened to me to see such a horrible thing; but the natives had numberless tales of women and children carried off, and the planters who spent their lives in the country had no doubt of the truth of them. Readers of Rudyard Kipling will remember his verses, "Ripple, ripple," which I can never read without seeing the Behar plains and the graceful brown women on the river banks.

The last day of my first year in India found me still in camp, and it may interest my readers to know how I spent it in my solitary Indian exile, so *allons*. Six o'clock saw the mists rising from the winding stream which surrounds the village where I was in camp, and I woke amid the oath-compelling clamour of domestic animals and inconsiderate natives, turned shivering out of bed, my rug having tumbled off as usual; and after a hasty wash I polished off some

pounds of cold beef by way of *chota hazri*, and lighting a pipe turned towards my accounts. An hour or two over puzzling Hindu receipts and calculations, and a few deputations from irritating natives with impossible petitions, and I was ready to supplement my modest morning meal, when kid roast, snipe and some cold plum pudding made me feel at peace with the world and I entered on my day's work. I sat from breakfast time till nearly five o'clock hearing cases and examining witnesses, coming away with a rooted conviction that the Psalmist wrote truly on the lack of veracity in mankind. A short stroll followed while the early sunset came on and I watched the western sky fading swiftly into the purple river mist.

Then my six o'clock dinner in my tent with the eternal kid and snipe, a row with my refractory puppy, and here I am. As I write, the air resounds with monotonous native voices from the village close by, singing some indecent Hindu pæan to the accompaniment of an erratic tom-tom—a musk rat goes twittering about to the huge delight of the five dogs who compose our happy family—a pariah breaks into a long wailing bark in the distance—a few jackals lift up their human voices in the grass jungle to the south, and a couple of night birds screech in the garden. Finally my ever-ready clerk brings me a coarse yellow sheet of native paper covered with Hindu writing to sign, and I prepare to close my book and finish the peg which stands on my camp table. . . . So farewell 1873.

CHAPTER V

AT THE INDIAN FOREIGN OFFICE

A golden cloud sank down to its rest
At the fall of night on a huge crag's breast,
And it floated off at the dawn of day
With a joyous dance on its azure way.

But a few sweet drops it had left behind,
To moisten the old rock's hoary rind,
And he stood in the desert sad and lone,
And a tear stole down o'er the silent stone.

—LERMONTOFF, translated by DURAND.

DURAND has spoken for himself up to this point. He has described his childhood, his student days, his arrival in India, and his impressions of Calcutta and Bhagalpur in a manner that no biographer could rival. But now his reminiscences end, and there is a long break in his diary. There is consequently a good opportunity for looking back to supplement, and comment on, these vivid autobiographical chapters.

It is a subject for regret that Durand was not sent to a public school and to a university. He suffered serious disadvantages during his education from lack of stimulus and competition both in studies and games, while he totally missed the influence of the beautiful surroundings and atmosphere that play so important a part at the older seats of learning. Yet, in spite of these drawbacks, Durand's knowledge of many subjects was deep. He was well read in the classics and knew English and French literature far better than most young Englishmen. He also spoke French and German with facility, while mathematics appeared to present few difficulties to him.

Like his elder brother, he had a distinct strain of poetry in his nature, as these pages prove. He also wrote excellent English, his dispatches being models in both

matter and style. He grasped the most complicated question easily, and analysed it with perfect lucidity, while his width of outlook, his sagacity, his courage combined with caution and his intuition were remarkable. His love of nature and of animals was profound.

Before he sailed for India, he had favourably impressed the Duke of Northumberland and Sir Henry Maine. The former wrote to Lady Durand, his stepmother: "Mortimer is one of the finest young men in every way that I know," while Sir Henry Maine's opinion ran: "Mr. Durand is nearly, if not quite, the most promising of the young civilians who have come under my observation."

At the bottom of his nature was an intense straightness —the quality he most admired in Lord Lansdowne—and he impressed on me that, in dealing with Orientals, it was right and advisable not only to be straight but, as far as possible, to prove that fact at each step. He considered that, as a nation, we possessed this quality, but that sufficient care was not taken to prove it to the world, and that, time and again, we had suffered from our failure to do so.

Loyalty was also a fundamental quality in Durand, as will appear in these pages. I have asked many men who served with or under him as to their views, and they generally replied that he was both loyal and straight. Others said that he was a great English gentleman. He detested doubtful stories and deprecated "remarks on third persons," as he termed disparaging gossip.

Throughout his life Durand was afflicted with intense shyness, and probably it was to mask this defect, of which he was fully aware, that he assumed a somewhat rigid official manner which, coupled with his height and commanding presence, gave him a reputation for aloofness and pride that was not deserved. He told me that he suffered agonies from shyness and inability to begin a conversation, and advised me to arrange for my children to meet as many people as possible. His sense of humour was very keen and apt to assert itself at inopportune moments. Sometimes when he assumed his most official manner, he was

merely struggling to repress an outbreak of mirth at an incident that had tickled his fancy.

He held strong views about music, and wrote in a letter :

> One may love to hear music and be deeply affected by it and even have a good ear—and yet not be all nerves and nonsense. But the real " musical people " seem to me, with rare exceptions, to be fit for little in the world. They rarely care for poetry, and therefore enjoy only the lower half of what is practically one thing. I always tell Ella that *prima facie* I distrust a man who plays the fiddle. They are not the best men. Of course there are exceptions. However, it is easy to damn the sins one has no mind for. Unless I am perfectly happy, music gives me more pain than pleasure, though I cannot help loving it, in spite of an indifferent ear for it.

Curiously enough for a man of his cultured tastes, Durand confessed to his diary that a clown always had an intense attraction for him ; so complex is human nature. He took little interest in food, but liked a good bottle of claret. He was also a moderate smoker. In his diary there are occasional references to rather gloomy periods of abstinence from both wine and tobacco, to see if the Spartan regimen increased his efficiency. Fortunately he came to the conclusion that it failed to do so. Generally speaking he had few prejudices, but he considered the Celtic element in the British to be an inferior strain. On more than one occasion he explained that as his mother's family came from Skye, Celtic blood flowed in his own veins, but that history proved the accuracy of his statement. On another occasion he was really shocked to hear from me that I was hunting in the New Forest in a bowler. In such matters his views were somewhat old-fashioned and rigid. He played football, cricket and lawn tennis extremely well, considering the long hours he spent in his office. He also rode and shot well. He was a real sportsman and ever a strong advocate of the maxim *Mens sana in corpore sano*, seizing every opportunity of taking exercise and of keeping himself fit.

After his father's death, which occurred when he was

only twenty, Durand, in the absence of his brother Edward in India, felt responsible for his brother Algernon, who was full of vitality and mischief. The boy's failure to work hard and to pass his examinations grieved him to the heart and brought out his intense love for him. This feeling Algernon returned throughout his life. Durand bore the burden of his family, some members of which leaned heavily on him. His eldest sister and his brothers assisted generously in cases of need, but he was evidently the favourite brother. Throughout his career, calls on his purse constituted a constant source of anxiety, that finds expression in his diaries and letters, although he met them in the most generous spirit and practised much self-denial. These calls, of course, precluded entertaining almost entirely, and thereby lessened social intercourse.

As a young man he was deeply religious and also remarkably pure-minded and chivalrous, with an underlying strain of manliness, which prompted the following entry in his diary :

I often think Christians dwell too little on the chivalry of Christ's nature. There is too much talk of meekness and submission, I should like to stand in the pulpit and say : " The Christ whom I preach to you was no coward's God. Never let that idea be yours. He was the God of the soldier, brave and ready and strong, gentle and courteous withal, as every true soldier must be. The man who can wield the sword does not war with the tongue. Brave and independent as none of you would be in times of danger—morally and physically brave—scornfully silent before the highest court of his nation—unflinching under pain—cool and deliberate in face of murderous mobs. Without blasphemy, a perfect ideal of a gentleman in word and thought and deed—fearless as Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche*, pure and loving towards women as the purest always are." If only men would preach Him out boldly for what He was, there would be fewer taunts at Christianity and contempt for Christians. They strip off all the attributes for which men have an innate admiration—which He possessed albeit to a marvellous extent—and then hold up a miserable apology for a God to the eyes of their flock—and tell them to be meek and gentle and take a kicking on all possible occasions. No wonder men recoil.

I have quoted this passage at length, as it reveals the fundamental feelings of the writer. He was always a soldier at heart, and once wrote to Lord Roberts : " I have never passed a day of my life without a pang of regret at not being a soldier." I also recollect how deeply he studied military history and how intensely he envied those who served in the Boer War and, later, in the Great War. There is little doubt that Durand would have made his mark, had he been permitted to join the Army.

Women he placed on a pedestal, declaring, as did his father before him, that they were twenty times better than men. This chivalrous attitude of mind was brought out vividly in an episode of Durand's early life. While studying in London he was very kindly treated by a middle-aged widow, who pitied the orphan and became his fast friend. She had suffered from the brutality of her husband, and so moved was young Durand by her unhappiness and loneliness, that he thought of making a home for her in India.

His sisters rightly opposed this quixotic scheme, and he renounced it for a while, but renewed it in another form, by deciding to abandon his career in the East and to return home to earn his living at the Bar. He went so far as to announce his intentions to his chief, who apparently refused to forward his application.

One result of the episode was to stimulate into activity the poetry latent in his nature, in the following glowing verses :

LOVE

" *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it. If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, he would be utterly contemned.*"

Only a woman in passionate tears,
The bright head bowed, and the wan cheek wet,
Fair, and young as the world counts years,
Hardly out of her girlhood yet.

AT THE INDIAN FOREIGN OFFICE

Eyes love-dimmed in the days that were,
 Dimmed by a hopeless misery now,
Silver lines in the sunny hair
 Showering down on the broad white brow.

Only a woman in passionate tears,
 Only the light gone out of a life,
Fair, and young as the world counts years,
 Loving and loveless—a widowed wife.

She had clung to him with a priceless love,
 Laughed at all that the world could say
Glad she could suffer for him, and prove
 Her woman's truth in a woman's way.

And he, he had whispered a lying word
 In the ears that were hot for the love of him,
And the deep true womanly heart was stirred,
 And the young life marred for a moment's whim.

Little he recked of the prize once won,
 Merciless turned from the yearning eyes
Up to his own at a scornless word
 Raised in a pitiful glad surprise.

Not that she bowed to the shameful yoke,
 Proudly defiant she rose at times,
And the grief welled up in her heart and broke
 In a wrath too deep for a writer's rhymes.

But he only laughed at the idle vaunt,
 Reading the power he used so well
In the eyes that filled at some cowardly taunt,
 And the quivering lip that she could not quell.

Bravely to others her woman's pride
 Veiled the sorrow she would not own,
And the face she wore was the face of a bride,
 Bitterly bearing her life alone.

She had chosen him out of the world, and now,
 Though a life-long scorn were her bitter meed,
She was faithful still to her maiden vow,
 Proud and faithful in word and deed.

And he knew it, and turned with a double hate
From the lips that would utter no word of blame,
Steadily driving the iron home
With never a shudder of manly shame.

So she is lying with hopeless eyes,
Wearily gathering strength to bear,
The white face turned to the pitiless skies,
And the young hands clenched in a passionate prayer :

" O God, forgive me and let me die,
I am nothing to him but an endless woe,
I have cursed his life with a life-long lie,
My darling—I who have loved him so."

Why did she love him ?—a deathless love
For a coward who never could feel its worth.
Ask of the terrible gods above,
Who mould and fashion the loves of earth.

Upon landing in India, young Durand possessed a distinct advantage from the fact that his father had been both Foreign Secretary and Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, for this meant that he had powerful friends in office. His sisters, too, were married in India, and his eldest brother was serving there. He consequently entered upon his career under the most favourable circumstances. Against this must be set a certain amount of ill-health, including attacks of liver, dysentery and sleeplessness, apart from prickly heat and other trying ailments. Generally speaking, it was the open air, the regular exercise and the sport at Bhagalpur that first made India attractive to him.

The change in his views was confirmed by seeing Miss Ella Sandys, " a graceful sunny-haired girl in a grey habit, who rode her bay stallion on the race-course as no girl had ever ridden a horse before." Matters moved forward as was natural in the circumstances, charming English girls being scarce in the out-stations of Bengal. At the same time, Durand was very young to marry, his income was small, and he does not seem to have made up his mind

to pledge himself until a sudden change occurred in his fortunes.

In June, 1874, he was appointed Attaché in the Foreign Office during the absence of Captain West Ridgeway [1] on six months' leave, and thus began a career which was destined to have such important results, and to prove Durand perhaps the most eminent member in his generation of the great Indian Civil Service. Three weeks after taking up his appointment at Simla, he became engaged to Ella Sandys, but, owing to the difficulty and expense of finding suitable accommodation at Calcutta, the wedding did not take place until the spring of 1875. The young couple then began married life in a little house in Simla, close to the Foreign Office, where, in the meantime, Durand had been confirmed in his appointment. To quote Durand : [2]

The work of the Foreign Office at that time fell into three main divisions.

There was, first, the foreign work proper—that is, the control of the relations between the Indian Government and countries outside India. These relations were, of course, carried on with due regard to the general policy of the Empire ; and the English Foreign Office had its diplomatic representatives in China, Persia, and other Asiatic countries. India, therefore, in a sense, had no foreign policy of its own. Nevertheless there was a large amount of work connected with such countries, for India had long been in close touch with them, and the Indian Government had its Residents, or Political Agents, in Turkish Arabia, in Persia, in Zanzibar, in Maskat, in Burma, and at times in other places. It was, moreover, in direct charge of our relations with Afghanistan and Baluchistan, and had to watch the state of affairs all over Central Asia, where the advance of Russia had for generations disquieted the minds of English statesmen.

Secondly, the Indian Foreign Office controlled our relations with the Native States in India, which covered more than a third of the Peninsula, and contained a population of sixty or seventy millions. Some of these States had in earlier days been independent powers, and formidable rivals to the British Government.

[1] Afterwards the Right Honourable Sir West Ridgeway.
[2] "Life of Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall," p. 205.

To carry out these various relations with States inside and outside India, the Foreign Office had under its orders, as before explained, a considerable diplomatic or "political" service; and attached to that service were several corps of infantry and cavalry.

Durand was an amazingly hard worker. To give an example, he was anxious to learn Persian rapidly, in order to qualify for service under the Indian Foreign Office. He took six weeks' leave to Calcutta, and during that period he worked day and night at the language, allowing a very few hours for sleep and exercise, while he conversed with his munshi at every meal. As a result of this strenuous application, combined with extraordinary capacity, he passed the difficult test of the Higher Proficiency, which proved, not only that he spoke the language fluently, but that he could read the crabbed script, and write it with ease, besides possessing some acquaintance with the literature, in which there is a good deal of Arabic, which has also to be understood. This *tour de force* was a "record," which has not been beaten, so far as I am aware, and one wonders how the munshi stood it.

Durand told me that he frequently worked from twelve to fifteen hours on end when he was pressed for time. During the period he was serving under Lord Roberts he sometimes worked through the night, and was only kept from freezing by hot cocoa brought in every hour by his servant.

The young civilian rapidly made his mark in his new appointment. The staff was small, and he was entrusted with the task of writing notes on important subjects. One of these evidently pleased Lord Northbrook, who expressed his cordial appreciation of it.

During my official life I have been much struck by the manner in which important work has been entrusted to, and successfully handled by, junior officials under the Indian Foreign Office, and the consequent rapid development of their capacity. In this respect the system in the English Foreign Office seems to be faulty. Highly educated junior officials are treated for years as little more than clerks,

with the result that many really good men have become disgusted, and rightly so. Razors should not be used for chopping wood, and brilliant young men should be given scope from the start.

Durand was not only absorbed in his work at the Foreign Office, but, in addition to it, he studied Russian with a view to translating Lermontoff's poems into English verse. He never learned to dance, and so disliked balls. His young wife, on the other hand, was considered one of the best dancers in India, and was naturally anxious to appear in public with her handsome young husband. With their points of view so far apart, some friction and unhappiness were inevitable :

> We went to a dance together and I spent a rather unpleasant night. I sloped off for a stroll in the woods by moonlight, but these late hours are not nice when one has to be up early for Russian. But it can't be helped, for she enjoys it more or less, although she complains that there is no one to join her in the fun and sympathize with her. It's hard enough for me to see her waltzing at all—so hard that I cannot look on—and of course my attempts at sympathy are awkward. I wish that damned waltz had never been invented. That and the low dresses of the period madden me sometimes. I wish most devoutly that I had between me and a brick wall the man who invented waltzing, with free leave to work my vengeance.

Throughout her life his wife was always yearning for the company of her husband, and in the early years it was hard for her to see him devoting so much of his spare time to learning Persian and Russian, instead of to her. On the other hand, there is reason to conclude that she did not realize the importance of helping her husband in his career by strict attention to social duties.

In the winter of 1875 India was thrilled by the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, who was the first heir to the British throne to visit the Empire over which he would some day rule. Durand gives an account of the landing at Calcutta where His Royal Highness was welcomed by the Viceroy, the British community, and by the Indian Princes and notables.

In the open space reserved for the purpose, the Princes and officials walked about or sat according to our good pleasure. Kashmir was there, the finest-looking of the Chiefs, plainly dressed and with a good deal of side on. Scindia in a white silk coat covered with embroidered flowers and the usual Mahratta puggree, yellow if I remember right. He looked what he is, a rather fine fellow spoilt by adulation. Holkar's [1] unwieldy body and insolent manner were as conspicuous as ever. Patiala was, as usual, chewing pan. His dress was a marvellous one, a blue silk or satin coat edged with several rows of large pearls, and a head-dress which was simply a mass of enormous diamonds, some as long as a blackbird's egg, and many over half an inch through, all cut in one fashion. The head-dress is said to have cost ten lakhs, the jewels being principally those of the Empress Eugénie. Travancore was there, plainly dressed in white, a smooth-shaven, short, fat man, with a pendulous face, the cheeks and lips positively flapping when he spoke. Salar Jang,[2] too, conspicuous as usual for his plain coat, like a Russian soldier's, and small white puggree. He looks, and is, the shrewdest of all our Indian potentates. Jaipur, small and insignificant-looking and courteous. Rewah with his face daubed with red, swaggering through the throng. Johore from the Straits with his short moustache and honest face, in a square velvet coat and black trousers. The Burmese in tall hats of beaten gold. The Nepal Envoys dressed in our uniforms, barring the little pearl-covered puggree and plume, smart and sturdy-looking. The Prince received some of the Chiefs in private and, I am told, enchanted them all by his manner, and in the evening he drove through the town to see the illuminations. They were decidedly good, the Fort and Government House, the High Court and the new Museum particularly so.

The arrangements for holding an installation ceremony, which fell on the Foreign Office, were onerous. Thousands of applications for tickets were received, and, "among them I have had one from a native which is a grand specimen of the malaprop style. He wants 'admission to the Investiture of the most Exhausted [Exalted] Order of the Star of India.'"

The installation ceremony was a decided success. The Indians performed their rôles well, and all went off without a hitch. The

[1] He was subsequently compelled to abdicate.

[2] Sir Salar Jang was, for many years, Prime Minister and virtual ruler of Haidarabad.

Prince spoke out his "Admonition" clearly. The departing procession was one of the most curious and interesting sights it is possible to imagine. His Royal Highness left the Durbar tent first, a large gold umbrella over his head, and four more borne on all sides of him. His pages, two middies from the Fleet, were dressed in the style of Charles II, wigs and loose trousers and plumed hats, and very high-heeled shoes. The Viceroy's pages were much the same, barring the wig. As the Prince came into the open, the lower blocks of spectators burst into a storm of hand-clapping and cheering, which was repeated in a less degree as each knight came by; also the little Begum of Bhopal, who looked like a chrysalis in her veil and swaddling clothes, was given many cheers. Perhaps the most curious of all the various groups who defiled past us were the Marwaris with their voluminous petticoats swaying from side to side, and the helmeted Rewah men with their mail coats and bucklers and their tall chief. Undoubtedly the least impressive were the Europeans, the tight uniforms and quiet colours making them look dingy and insignificant. It was a strange scene, not to be imagined or imitated in England or any European country.

Durand was certainly not philoprogenitive at this period. He looked forward to having children with aversion, partly owing to fear that his wife's affections would be divided, and partly through forebodings that his expenditure would exceed his income. His views were very strong:

At dinner last night Mrs. Talbot[1] began a conversation which nearly ended in a row. She said with a sigh, referring to her early married life in the Deccan, "I shall never be so happy again." I said in a somewhat surprised voice, "Why not?" And the answer was, "Well, I shall never have undivided happiness again. My children will be at home, and I shall always be wanting to go to them." I said I hoped my wife would never feel the same, for it would make me very unhappy, and then dropped the conversation. It is one I never can pursue without losing my temper. If Ella ever showed one moment's hesitation between me and her children, I believe it would break my heart. She should go if she wished it, but she should go for ever. I would never see her face again, nor the hated faces of the children who had robbed me of her love. I hope there may never be another, and I hope I may not learn to hate this one. It maddens me to think of such a possibility.

[1] Wife of Captain (later Sir Adelbert) Talbot.

When, in the spring of 1876, a son was born to the young couple, the entries in the diary show disappointment that it was not a girl, coupled with the fervent hope that no more children would appear. However, in due course, natural affection asserted itself, a daughter was welcomed, and few men loved his children more deeply than Durand.

In the spring of 1876 Lord Northbrook resigned the Viceroyalty, and Lord Lytton, during whose tenure of office the Afghan problem was destined to be of paramount importance, arrived in India. Durand saw very little of the new Viceroy at this period, for in the summer of 1876 he was appointed First Assistant to Mr. (later Sir Alfred) Lyall, who held the post of Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana. For two months he served at the hill station of Abu, where the chiefs and the political officials spend the summer.

Durand had met Lyall in England and at Calcutta, and he was now in charge of his office and gradually became the friend of his talented chief. He also enjoyed excellent sport, bagging his first tiger and his first leopard with Sir Charles Yate, who was then a subaltern in the Indian Staff Corps and a noted Nimrod.

Lyall was inclined to regard big game shooting as barbarous, but he soon realized that Durand had character, brains and literary tastes, and in time became his life-long friend, to the benefit of both men, but more especially of the younger man. In the autumn, visits were paid to the various Rajput chiefs, who lived in feudal and picturesque pomp and are, in many cases, fine, manly sportsmen. Throughout the tour, fair sport was enjoyed, which is faithfully detailed in the diary, together with brief notices of the places visited.

In view of Durand's future interest in the formation of the Imperial Service Troops, the following merits quotation :

> On to Jaipur, where we arrived about five in the evening. Drove in procession through the city, between lanes of men and horses and elephants and guns and chariots and camels, all making a fearful

noise. The crowd was tremendous, and the sight very remarkable. The troops were miserable, badly armed and badly dressed, sixteen-hand horses next to twelve-hand *tats*, and decrepit old men rubbing shoulders with children in uniform, but it was a quaint sight.

During this tour of service, Durand attended the Delhi Assemblage, at which Lord Lytton proclaimed the assumption by Queen Victoria of the title of *Kaiser-i-Hind* or Empress of India, before some seventy thousand assembled guests. This was the most important ceremony that had taken place since the British created their empire in India.

Looking down from the historic Ridge, where a little body of Englishmen and loyal Indians had stood at bay, besieging and besieged, through the terrible summer of 1857, one saw in every direction long streets of tents—a real city of canvas. There our fiercest fighting had been twenty years before; there the English Empire was now to be formally proclaimed. It was proclaimed with great pomp, and, on the whole, Lord Lytton was successful in a very difficult task.

The opportunity of making the acquaintance of the Rajput chiefs, while still a junior official, was of great value to Durand; he also benefited by the healthy camp life and the sport. But he was very glad when, in November, 1877, he received a summons calling him back to the Foreign Office. In the following year, Lyall was selected to be Foreign Secretary, which appointment naturally delighted Durand.

* * * * *

In September, 1879, Major-General Sir Frederick Roberts applied for Durand "to accompany him on his expedition to Kabul, where poor Cavagnari, Jenkyns, Hamilton, the Doctor and seventy of the Guides have been butchered." Under these dramatic circumstances, Durand first visited the country, with which his name was to be so honourably and permanently connected.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR

Never before, during the history of the British power in India, had so wild, ill-considered, and adventurous a scheme of far-distant aggression been entertained.—SIR HENRY DURAND.

DURAND served the British Empire in three continents, but the country most imperishably connected with his name is Afghanistan. Both he and his father before him won their spurs in that Switzerland of Asia, their combined association with it extending over a period of fifty years. They both constantly studied its problems from every aspect, the elder Durand writing the "History of the First Afghan War" that Lord Roberts carried with him on his campaigns and valued very highly, while the younger Durand recorded his father's exploits and his views on the most important country bordering the Indian Empire.

In these circumstances, it seems desirable to give a brief account of Afghan history, not merely to serve as a background to this biography, but also to enable the reader to follow the steps taken by Great Britain, Russia and Persia to guard their interests in Central Asia. A study of these problems should interest everyone who is connected with our great Indian Empire either directly or indirectly.

The history of Afghanistan as an independent state begins with the assassination, in 1747, of Nadir Shah, that great soldier, who restored to Persia her ancient widespreading empire, including the provinces that now make up Afghanistan. Among his favourite generals was Ahmad Khan, chief of the Abdali tribe, who commanded the Afghan contingent that served Nadir so loyally in his campaigns. During the confusion that followed the assassination of Nadir Shah, Ahmad Khan seized a convoy

of the treasure that was on its way from Delhi to Persia and marched off to found a kingdom. He was a born leader of men and was able to secure not only Afghanistan, as it exists to-day, but also the Punjab and districts in Sind. Westwards he annexed the Persian province of Khorasan where Shah Rukh, the grandson of Nadir Shah, ruled under his protection. Ahmad Shah was a great Oriental statesman who created a sense of nationality amongst his rude countrymen, by fostering pride of race, by giving all positions of trust to Afghans and by leading them from victory to victory.

After winning his kingdom, he proclaimed himself Ahmad Shah, assuming the title of *Durr-i-Durrani* or "Pearl of Pearls." As a result the Abdali tribesmen became known as "Durranis," and under this name have played the leading part in Afghanistan. The royal house belonged to the Sadozai branch of the tribe, while the Vizier was the head of the rival Barakzai family.

Upon the death of Ahmad, Shah in 1773, his son Timur Shah ruled for twenty years with Kabul as his capital. Thanks to the prestige of his father, his authority was successfully maintained upon the whole, although there was a general weakening of control over the outlying provinces, while the power of the Barakzai clan gradually increased at the expense of the Sadozai.

Timur Shah died in 1793 and left behind him twenty-three sons and thirteen daughters. He was succeeded by his son Zaman Shah, during whose reign Afghanistan, for the first time, came into contact with the British. Zaman Shah's internal position was weakened by the rivalry of his brothers and by the intrigues of the sirdars or chiefs. He was successful in defeating his brother Humayun, who was Governor of Kandahar, his army being led by his only full brother, Shuja-ul-Mulk, who was destined to play a leading part on the stage of Afghanistan. After the capture of Kandahar he made terms with another brother, Mahmud, who held Herat.

Persia was ruled at this time by the capable Aga Mo-

hamed Shah, who seized Meshed, the capital of Khorasan, and tortured to death the blind Shah Rukh, the protégé of the Afghan ruler. The astute Persian dispatched an embassy to Zaman Shah with gifts and assurances, which he perforce accepted for the time being, since it was essential for him to settle accounts immediately with the Sikhs in the Punjab ; as a matter of fact, Khorasan thenceforward remained a Persian province.

Zaman Shah, delayed as he had been by the above complications, marched to Lahore, where he received the nominal submission of the Sikhs who were governed by that rising ruler, Ranjit Singh. This action of Zaman Shah was viewed with marked disfavour by the British, as the Vizier of Oudh, as well as many Indian rajas and Tippu Sultan, were all in communication with him.

Lord Wellesley conceived the brilliant plan of inducing Persia to put pressure on Zaman Shah and thus keep him out of Indian politics. The success of the plan was assured by the demand of the Afghan Amir for the restoration of Khorasan, to which the Persian monarch curtly replied that he intended to regain all the lost provinces of Persia, among which, it must be remembered, figured those that constituted Afghanistan. He then marched into Khorasan, and this movement compelled Zaman Shah to return to Peshawar and to watch events on his western borders.

The star of Zaman Shah now set, and that suddenly. Among Afghans treachery and intrigue are almost universal, and Painda Khan, chief of the powerful Barakzai clan, joined Mahmud in a conspiracy to dethrone the Amir. The plot was detected in time, and Mahmud escaped to Persia, but the Barakzai chief was put to death. His son Fath Khan joined Mahmud in Khorasan, and his intrigues were so successful that, in 1801, Mahmud obtained possession of Kandahar and, marching on Kabul, captured Zaman Shah, whom he blinded. Simultaneously with this success of Mahmud, Shuja-ul-Mulk, who was Governor of Peshawar, declared his independence, but was unable to maintain his position and took refuge in India.

At first Mahmud was successful everywhere. He crushed the Ghilzais, the most important tribe after the Durranis who had rebelled; he drove the Uzbegs, who had invaded Afghan Turkistan, across the Oxus ; and he inflicted a second defeat on Shuja-ul-Mulk. Thus in 1802 his position had been made secure, but, with supreme folly, he neglected his duties and devoted himself to pleasure. In Afghanistan the monarch must not only reign but must rule personally with an iron hand or else lose his throne.

The indolence of Mahmud encouraged his chiefs to conspire, with the result that a rebellion broke out in favour of Shuja-ul-Mulk, who entered Kabul unopposed, and imprisoned Mahmud in a dungeon. In spite of intrigues and treachery, Shah Shuja, as he termed himself, held his own until the escape of Mahmud brought matters to a fresh crisis. In the action that followed he defeated Mahmud and his adherents, and then marched to Peshawar to receive a British Mission under Mountstuart Elphinstone.

Up to this point it is clear that British policy towards Afghanistan was entirely concerned with preventing the Afghans from gaining power in the Punjab. But the situation had now changed and with it our policy towards Afghanistan.

Among the far-reaching plans of Napoleon was one for the invasion of India across Persia and Afghanistan in conjunction with Russia. It may be thought that our statesmen should have realized the impracticable nature of such an operation, but the genius of Napoleon was so dazzling that no project seemed to be beyond his power of achievement, and in any case it was wise to take precautions.

The first mission of Captain John Malcolm to Fath Ali Shah was undertaken to induce the Persian monarch to bring pressure on Zaman Shah as already mentioned ; to counteract any possible designs of the French ; and to forward British and Indian commercial interests. The mission was entirely successful, and a treaty was signed, by the terms of which Fath Ali Shah agreed to make no peace with the Afghan monarch unless the latter renounced

his designs on the British possessions in India. There were also stringent provisions for the expulsion and "extirpation" of any French subjects who wished to reside in Persia.

Napoleon was not deterred by this treaty. He was well informed by his agents as to the recent seizure of the Persian provinces of Georgia and Armenia by Russia, and accordingly, in 1804, he made proposals to Persia for an alliance against Russia. Fath Ali had already applied to England for help, and was dispatching an ambassador to India; consequently no immediate reply was given to the French envoy.

In 1805 Napoleon declared war on Russia, and in the following year a French envoy appeared at Tehran with an offer to restore Georgia to Persia by means of a French army, if the Shah would repudiate the British alliance and join in an invasion of India across Afghanistan. Fath Ali Shah was most unwilling to ally himself to a nation that had executed its monarch and hoped for a favourable reply from the British. Partly owing to the length of time occupied by correspondence between Persia, Calcutta and London, the Shah received no assurances, and feeling himself deserted, in 1807, he accepted the proposals and agreed "to appoint an army to march on India by way of Kabul and Kandahar."

But before long the Persian monarch began to regret turning his back on the British, for in this very year Napoleon made peace with Russia by the Convention of Tilsit, in which no mention was made of the restoration of Georgia to Persia. Meanwhile both London and Calcutta were alarmed by the predominance that France had acquired in Persia, and in 1808–9 Sir Harford Jones as British Minister, and Malcolm as representing the Viceroy, were dispatched to Persia with offers of an annual subsidy so long as Great Britain was at war with Russia. Fath Ali, who realized that he had made a great mistake in listening to the French, welcomed the British, who, among other gifts, brought a valuable diamond for the avaricious Shah.

A new treaty, which was entirely satisfactory to both parties, was speedily negotiated and the French alliance was cancelled.

To return to Afghanistan, that country had now become important to the British as forming part of the " corridor " leading from Persia to India. No longer was it a question of checking Afghan invasions of the Punjab, for such were no longer to be feared, but it was considered to be essential to make terms with the ruler of the country and to bind him to an agreement to co-operate with the British and to deny right of way through the land gates of India.

When Shah Shuja first received intimation of the proposed dispatch of a British Mission, his suspicions were awakened and he feared lest he might be called upon to cede a province. However, as soon as he realized that the sole object was to prevent the French and Russians from entering Afghanistan, he changed his views ; he also was most anxious to receive the splendid gifts that would, he understood, be presented to him. He consequently welcomed Mr. Elphinstone most warmly at Peshawar in February, 1809, and a treaty, by the terms of which the French and other Europeans were to be rigorously excluded from Afghanistan, was negotiated and signed without difficulty. As it happened, the rupture between France and Russia, which occurred at this period, removed all fears of an invasion of India by the two Powers. In other words, the storm had passed, but these friendly negotiations with Afghanistan were destined to bear fruit in the future.

Shah Shuja had no luck. While the British Embassy was negotiating with him at Peshawar, Mahmud and Fath Khan captured Kandahar and Kabul. They then advanced on Peshawar and defeated Shah Shuja at Gandamak, a village to the west of Jalalabad on the Kabul road. Shah Shuja escaped and, after many adventures, sought refuge with the British and joined Zaman Shah at Ludhiana.

The wheel of fortune had indeed turned round when Mahmud, the erstwhile occupant of a dungeon, again sat on the throne at Kabul. But he had learned nothing

and, devoting himself entirely to the pleasures of the harem, he allowed Fath Khan to rule the country, which he did with remarkable capacity, aided by his younger brother Dost Mohamed. Among the problems which occupied the earnest attention of the Vizier was that of Herat, which was ruled independently by Firuz Mirza, a brother of Mahmud. Persia had by no means acquiesced in the loss of the provinces which make up Afghanistan and, at this period, made repeated efforts to obtain possession of Herat, whose ruler had, for some years, barely managed to maintain his position by payments of money and by intrigue. Firuz, in 1816, was threatened by a powerful Persian army, which had been concentrated at Meshed, and appealed for help to Mahmud. Fath Khan took advantage of this opening and, proceeding in person to Herat, arrested the prince. In a search for his treasure, the harem was entered by Dost Mohamed, who apparently insulted its occupants, chief among whom was a daughter of Mahmud.

Fath Khan set to work to organize the forces of Herat and repelled the Persians, whose losses were considerable, thus rendering a great service to Mahmud. He foolishly sent Firuz Mirza to Kabul, where his account of the violation of the harem aroused the hostility of Mahmud and of his son Kamran to such an extent that Fath Khan was blinded and subsequently flayed alive before being hacked to pieces. This barbarous act of vengeance outraged even the callous Afghans. Revolts broke out in almost every district, and Mahmud, after suffering defeat near Kabul in 1808, was only too thankful to take refuge at Herat, where, to save himself, he agreed to acknowledge the suzerainty of Persia and to pay tribute.

After the death of Fath Khan, Mohamed Azim Khan, the eldest son, took the lead among his twenty-one brothers. At first an effort was made to induce Shah Shuja to return to Afghanistan as monarch, while the Barakzais ruled, but these terms he refused to accept. Consequently other puppets were set up as a temporary expedient and meanwhile

Ranjit Singh, the "Lion of the Punjab," began to annex the outlying provinces of the Afghan kingdom and to found an independent state. The Afghans attacked him at Nowshera, but were defeated and practically driven out of the plains of India by the occupation of Peshawar, although Ranjit Singh, possibly with the idea of dividing the family, allowed one of the Barakzai brothers to remain as its governor, on condition that his suzerainty was acknowledged and tribute paid.

Mohamed Azim Khan died shortly after his defeat by the Afghans, and the brothers continued to quarrel in true Afghan fashion, but Dost Mohamed obtained possession of Kabul in 1826, with unfriendly brothers holding Kandahar and Peshawar. The position of the usurpers was weak, for not only was Mahmud ruling at Herat, and Ranjit Singh in the Punjab, but Shah Shuja had still to be reckoned with.

In 1834 the refugee Shah left Ludhiana with an army of twenty-two thousand Afghans and Indians commanded by a Scottish adventurer, and marched on Kandahar through the Bolan Pass. Dost Mohamed came to the rescue of his brother Kuhendil Khan, and a stubbornly contested fight ensued. Campbell beat off attack after attack, but, like Darius at Issus, Shah Shuja turned and fled before the day was decided.

Ranjit Singh had taken advantage of the absence of Dost Mohamed from Kabul to annex Peshawar, which was finally severed from Afghanistan, but the victory of Dost Mohamed gave him the predominance over his brothers that was essential, and he ruled over the compact heart of the once wide-spreading Durrani kingdom, with the title of Amir.

Dost Mohamed decided to inaugurate his accession by an attempt to recover Peshawar, for the loss of this fair city, lying in a valley famous for its fertility, damaged his prestige and galled his pride. He collected an army and marched down to the plains of India. Ranjit Singh met him, but, knowing the Afghan character, he opened nego-

tiations, and bought over some of the disloyal and greedy Barakzai brothers. So successful were these intrigues that Dost Mohamed was forced to flee back to Kabul—but he never forgot Peshawar.

To the student of Central Asian politics, it is interesting to note how, early in the nineteenth century, the Russian menace to India gave cause for watchfulness and anxiety. In 1838, the year before the great advance of Russia across Central Asia commenced, her boundary in Asia ran from the north-east corner of the Caspian Sea, up the Ural River to Orenburg and so eastwards. Actually Russia, as a glance at the map shows, was separated from the Afghan frontier and from Persia (so far as her Central Asian boundary was concerned) by vast territories which included waterless deserts, inhabited by robber nomads, while, in India at this period, the British boundary was the river Sutlej. What then caused this spirit of antagonism to Russia and this fear of her power?

The reply must be sought in Persia. During the early decades of the nineteenth century, that country had been driven from Georgia and Armenia by Russian troops, and her complete defeat, after two campaigns, had been registered in the Treaty of Turkomanchai, signed in 1828, by the terms of which Persia ratified the loss of many rich provinces to the Muscovites. A few years later she determined to seek compensation by the recovery of her former provinces of Herat, Kandahar and Kabul, which had become the kingdom of Afghanistan. Russia being predominant at the Court of the Shah at this period, this policy was viewed with apprehension by the British, since, if successful, it meant the establishment of Russian influence south of the Hindu Kush and close to the borders of India. From the Russian point of view, it was considered that if Persia took Herat, she would ultimately absorb Kandahar and Kabul, and that, through Persian agency, and without any cost whatever to Russia, a heavy strain would be placed on Great Britain to meet the new situation. As it happened,

the Persian objective throughout was Herat, and for a period of twenty-five years—from 1832 to 1857—Persian policy was dominated by a steady determination to capture that city. This policy was the cause of the First Afghan War.

In 1832 Abbas Mirza, the Persian Heir-Apparent, marched into Khorasan with a powerful force and restored the authority of the Shah, which had almost disappeared in that province. By the capture of various strongholds he subdued the rebellious chieftains, and then decided to attack Herat, which was ruled as an independent state by Kamran Mirza, the son of Mahmud. The Prince of Herat had, however, become a debauchee, and the power had fallen entirely into the hands of his astute Vizier, Yar Mohamed Khan. The Vizier visited Abbas Mirza, who pressed him by every means, including the extraction of two of his teeth, to acknowledge Persian suzerainty and pay tribute, but, failing in these negotiations, he marched on Herat.

At this juncture Abbas Mirza was recalled to Court and almost immediately died ; and his son Mohamed Mirza patched up a temporary agreement and hastened to Tehran to secure his recognition as Heir-Apparent by Fath Ali Shah, who also shortly afterwards passed away. Mohamed Shah, who thereby succeeded to the throne, was not friendly to the British as his grandfather had been, and in 1837, despite British remonstrances, he marched against Herat.

We must now consider the position in Afghanistan. Dost Mohamed, not finding himself strong enough to oust the Sikhs from Peshawar without help, appealed to Lord Auckland, the newly-arrived Viceroy, to induce Ranjit Singh to give up Peshawar with the Punjab to the Indus, and to assist him against the Persians. The immediate result of this step was to cause his brothers at Kandahar, who feared that he might succeed in this policy, to send envoys to the Shah with an offer of submission. Letters were also written to the Russians, and from both

quarters favourable replies were received, Russia dispatching a Captain Vitkavich to Kandahar.

Lord Auckland replied to the overtures of Dost Mohamed that the friendly relations existing between the British and Ranjit Singh precluded him from taking action about Peshawar, but that he was sending a Mission to discuss various matters with him. Alexander Burnes, the envoy, had already visited Kabul as a traveller and was well received by the Amir. That capable ruler explained that his policy was to reunite to his kingdom Peshawar on the east and Herat on the west through an alliance with the British, and that by this means he hoped to attain one if not both of his objects. Shortly after the arrival of Burnes, Vitkavich appeared on the scene from Kandahar, where he had induced the disloyal Kuhendil Khan to conclude the agreement with Persia, but Dost Mohamed, pending the result of his negotiations with Burnes, kept the Russian agent at a distance and paid him no outward honour.

Dost Mohamed realized that, in view of the Persian invasion, it was better to deal with the Herat problem first, and offered to send an army to the assistance of Yar Mohamed. In return for this, he stipulated for a subsidy with which to pay his troops and for recognition as Amir of Kabul. Burnes strongly supported these proposals, and also one by which Dost Mohamed should be allowed to hold Peshawar and pay tribute to Ranjit Singh, which latter scheme was, of course, open to grave objections.

Lord Auckland rejected this policy in its entirety. He demanded the dismissal of Vitkavich and the renouncement of all Afghan claims on Peshawar. It is impossible to avoid condemning the policy of Lord Auckland for his refusal to accept proposals that would have saved Herat at small cost and thereby have achieved the main object of British policy, which was to keep Russian agents and influence away from Afghanistan, and to maintain British influence supreme in the country. His ineptitude drove Dost Mohamed into the arms of Vitkavich, who was profuse

in promises of money and other help, and, through his influence, Dost Mohamed not only turned his back on the British, but joined his brothers in their agreement with Persia. The suzerainty of the Shah was acknowledged, and troops were promised to help in the capture of Herat in return for the loan of a Persian army in the future to aid in the reconquest of Peshawar.

In other words, Persian influence, with a dominating Russia in the background, had taken the place of an Amir who was supported by Great Britain and was anxious to expel Russo-Persian influence from his country. It is to be noted that Russia could not back up her policy with troops, and, as it proved, Great Britain could bring sufficient pressure to bear on Persia in the Persian Gulf to compel her to listen to her wishes. Finally, there was no longer any fear of an Afghan invasion of India, for Dost Mohamed had shown his weakness by appealing for help to induce the Sikhs to quit Peshawar.

The policy of Lord Auckland is thus summarized by the elder Durand :[1]

> In order to repel the shadow of Russian aggression, we had resolved to force Shah Shuja, a weak and worthless exile, upon the Afghan people, till then well disposed towards us ; and this great and unprovoked injustice, the cause of all our subsequent troubles in Afghanistan, was to be effected by military measures of which the rashness and folly seem at the present day almost inconceivable. The objects of the expedition were twofold : first, the overthrow of the Barakzai dynasty and the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne of his fathers ; secondly, the relief or recapture of Herat, then besieged by the Persians with Russian countenance and aid.

Sir Henry Durand not only earned high distinction in this campaign, but his "History of the First Afghan War," which was published in 1879, with a preface by his distinguished son, gives a sense of actuality, and is so vividly and so honestly written that it is of great value.

He points out that "the plan of campaign was for 20,000 troops to start from Firozapur and effect a junction with a

[1] "Life of Sir Henry Durand," Vol. I, p. 40.

force of 5,000 men separated from them by a distance of 780 miles." From Firozapur (which incidentally was at the mercy of the powerful Sikh army at Lahore) to Kandahar was a distance of 850 miles, with lines of communication running across Sind, ruled by hostile Amirs and rendered more difficult by the formidable obstacle of the Indus. From Kandahar to Herat was 370 miles, making the total distance exceed 1,200 miles. Almost everywhere supplies and water were scanty, and a serious reverse would, inevitably, spell disaster. Sir Henry Durand aptly wrote :

> Afghanistan merited the character given to Spain by the Fourth Henry of France: "Invade with a large force, and you are destroyed by starvation ; invade with a small one, and you are overwhelmed by hostile people." And as if to superadd ridicule to the dangers of the enterprise, which was avowedly undertaken to relieve or recapture a fortress famed for its strength, and possibly defended by a large Persian artillery and Russian engineers, the complement of battering-guns taken with the force was four eighteen-pounders. In a few words, the plan of the campaign violated in a glaring manner all usual military precautions.[1]

Perhaps the finest quality of the British officer is his remarkable initiative, and the successful defence of Herat against the Persian army constitutes a signal example of it. A young English artillery officer, Eldred Pottinger, arrived in disguise, revealed his identity and became the life and soul of the garrison. He induced Yar Mohamed to strengthen the bastions, to remove buildings that gave cover to the assailants, and instilled such courage into the besieged that Mohamed Shah, in spite of many assaults, failed utterly to capture the city. Had Lord Auckland possessed any political sense, the news that Persia had been repulsed before the walls of Herat would have caused him to reconsider and cancel his plans for the dispatch of a British force into Afghanistan, but he still persisted in his unjust scheme of forcing Shah Shuja on the Afghan people, and by his action he stands condemned at the bar of history.

[1] "Life of Sir Henry Durand," Vol. I. p. 91.

The army which assembled on the Indus experienced great difficulties in its march across the salt deserts of Sind and through the rugged gorges of the Bolan Pass, with scarcity of supplies almost everywhere, but after much suffering and sickness it reached Kandahar, which was not defended by Kuhendil Khan. Shah Shuja was formally enthroned at Kandahar and the army prepared to continue the advance to Kabul.

General Sir John Keane was advised by Sir William Macnaghten, his Political Officer, that Ghazni, a very strong fortress, would not be held, and consequently he left his siege guns behind. This decision he bitterly regretted when, upon reaching Ghazni, he realized the strength of its fortifications. It was fortunately discovered that the Kabul Gate had not been blocked up, and consequently it was decided to attempt to blow it up and to storm the city. Unless Ghazni had been captured, the force would probably have starved.

Sir Henry Durand, at that time a lieutenant in the Bengal Engineers, although very weak from a recent attack of jaundice, played a leading part in the storm :

The morning star was high in the heavens when the explosion party stepped forward to its duty. In perfect silence, led by the engineer Durand, they advanced to within 150 yards of the works, when a challenge from the walls, a shot, and a shout, told that the party was discovered. Instantly the garrison were on the alert; their musketry rang free and quick from the ramparts, and blue lights suddenly glared on the top of the battlements, brilliantly illuminating the approach to the gate. A raking fire from the low outer works, which swept the bridge at half-pistol-shot, would have annihilated the engineers and their men, but, strange to say, though the ramparts flashed fire from every loophole, the bridge was passed without a shot from the lower works. . . . Durand reached the gate, and, having laid the first bag of powder containing the end of the hose, man after man stepped up and deposited his powder. . . . Durand uncoiled the hose, laying it close to the foot of scarp. . . . On igniting the quick-match the portfire did not light, and the engineer was some time blowing at his slow-match and portfire together before the latter caught and blazed. . . . A column of flame and

smoke rising above the gateway, and followed by a dull heavy report, proved that the charge was sprung.[1]

After the explosion the storming party [2] charged through the shattered gateway and, at first, met with little resistance from the dismayed Afghans. Brigadier-General Robert Sale, who was preparing to advance in support, was informed by an officer that a complete breach had not been made. He thereupon sounded the "Retreat," but the situation was saved by Durand reporting that the explosion had been entirely successful.

In those days there was no Victoria Cross to reward such deeds of valour, but, some forty years later, a "Durand Medal" was founded in Durand's honour, to be bestowed on Indian officers of the Corps of Sappers and Miners. The troops were rewarded with a Ghazni medal, on which the famous Kabul Gate was reproduced, and Sir John Keane was created Baron Keane of Ghazni.

The fall of this fortress, held to be impregnable throughout Afghanistan, sealed the fate of Dost Mohamed. Deserted by his adherents, he fled northwards and took refuge with the Amir of Bokhara, who at first imprisoned, but eventually released, the refugee Afghan.

The British marched into Kabul in August, 1840, and replaced Shah Shuja on the throne of his ancestors. The Shah wished to rule, and when Dost Mohamed, utterly discouraged by his failure to rally his adherents, surrendered to the British three months later, it afforded them, as the elder Durand aptly put it, a golden opportunity for "an honourable termination to the armed occupation of Afghanistan, and for the triumphant return of the Anglo-Indian army to its own frontier."

Macnaghten, however, decided against withdrawal and set to work to govern the country, and thereby

[1] "Life of Sir Henry Durand," Vol. I, p. 177.

[2] The storming party was furnished by the 13th Somerset Light Infantry, which was awarded a mural crown as a distinction for this feat of arms. I am indebted for this interesting piece of information to a friend, whose grandfather, Colonel E. T. Tronson, commanded the regiment on this occasion and was mentioned in dispatches.



THE DURAND MEDAL.

excited the deep hostility and innate fanaticism of the Afghans.

Shortly after the arrival of the force at Kabul, Durand was appointed engineer to the Mission, and set to work to select sites for barracks. He wrote that he

had from the first deemed it essential to have military possession of the Bala Hissar, which secured the command of the capital, and admitted of having its citadel easily placed in such a state of defence as, with a garrison of a thousand men and a few guns, would have been able to defy all that Afghanistan could bring to attack the post. The Shah, upon various pretences, opposed this measure of precaution, and Macnaghten weakly yielded to objections which he felt and acknowledged to be ridiculous.[1]

Macnaghten's weakness on this occasion was one of the main causes of the disaster that was soon to take place. In the autumn, Durand was passed over when he considered it was his right to take part in an expedition to Kunduz. He thereupon resigned his appointment with the approval of Sir John Keane, who said to him, "I cannot but congratulate you on quitting the country, for, mark my words, it will not be long before there is here some signal catastrophe."[2] Never were words more prophetic.

The expeditionary force was reduced in size, and orders were issued to cut down expenditure, so that the allowances paid to leading Afghan sirdars were discontinued. These and other acts caused discontent to increase during 1841, when it was realized that the Shah was a puppet in the hands of the "infidels," a situation that was vigorously and successfully exploited by the fanatical mullas.

In the autumn of 1841 the subsidy paid to the Ghilzais, who inhabited the mountainous country between Kabul and Jalalabad, was most unwisely reduced, with the result that they revolted. Sale was dispatched from Kabul with his brigade to reopen this, the main line of communication. The Ghilzais opposed him resolutely, and it cost him serious losses to cut his way through to Gandamak. He finally established himself at Jalalabad.

[1] "Life of Sir Henry Durand," Vol. I, p. 205. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 211.

At Kabul, Macnaghten was deaf to warnings and blind to the coming storm, which was heralded by an outbreak in which Burnes was attacked and murdered by a fanatical mob. The whole country then rose, and the force was cut off from India. Had their leaders displayed the usual British qualities, and had they occupied the Bala Hissar, they could have beaten off any Afghan attack, but General Elphinstone was old and infirm, and there were divided counsels which paralysed action.

It was decided to withdraw entirely from Afghanistan, relying upon a safe conduct promised by Akbar Khan, a son of Dost Mohamed. In spite of the murder of Macnaghten at a conference, the British force, encumbered by women and camp followers, started off on the fatal march to Jalalabad in mid-winter. No attempt was made to picket the heights, and the entire force, attacked incessantly at a grave disadvantage, was massacred at Jagdallak, Doctor Brydon[1] reaching Jalalabad as the sole survivor. This was the greatest disaster suffered by British arms in Asia, and constituted a severe blow to our prestige. Sale, who at one time had decided to retire on a safe-conduct, held Jalalabad, and the city was blockaded by Akbar Khan, who, however, evinced no desire to assault it.

After the retreat of the British from Kabul, the insurgents had proclaimed Zaman Khan (a nephew of Dost Mohamed) Amir. Akbar Khan was also a claimant for power; and Shah Shuja, feeling powerless to cope with his rivals, decided to leave Kabul and regain touch with the British; but the unfortunate man was attacked outside his capital by a son of Zaman Khan, and murdered.

Meanwhile a strong force had been assembled under General Sir Frederick Pollock at Peshawar, which, in the spring, forced the Khaibar Pass by occupying the heights and relieved Jalalabad. Pollock next defeated the Ghilzais at Jagdallak, and entered Kabul as a victor on September 15. There he was joined by General Nott, who, in spite of dangers similar to those experienced at Kabul,

[1] Surgeon-Major William Brydon, C.B.

had maintained his position at Kandahar. The Great Bazaar of Kabul was destroyed by the victors as an act of retribution, and the British troops evacuated Afghanistan and returned to India.

British generosity, like charity, covers many faults. Dost Mohamed, who had been given a princely pension in India and a residence at Calcutta, saw the power, the organization and the justice of the British. He had profited by his misfortunes, and when, after the evacuation of Afghanistan by the British expedition, he was permitted to return to Kabul, he was accepted by all classes as Amir. The British on their side had the good sense to realize the mistakes in policy that they had committed, which had caused them untold loss in blood, in prestige, and in gold, and had ended in complete failure.

CHAPTER VII

THE SECOND AFGHAN WAR

On our status in Afghanistan, that land of rocks and ruffians, depends in great measure our influence in Central Asia, and indirectly the strength of our position in India.—"THE OBSERVER." 1879.

THE rapid advance of Russia in Central Asia in the period following the First Afghan War was inevitable, in view of the fact that she was brought into contact with a number of weak states that were entirely unable, even had they been willing, to prevent their subjects from raiding and committing other acts that no civilized Power would tolerate. In 1844 the Sea of Aral was explored, and three years later a fort was constructed at the mouth of the Syr Daria. This waterway solved the difficult question of transport, and Ak Masjid, an important fortress, belonging to the Khanate of Khokand, and situated two hundred miles upstream, was captured in 1853.

The Crimean War stopped the forward movement for a while, but in 1865 the important city of Tashkent was stormed, this success bringing Russia within striking distance of the great Khanates of Khiva and Bokhara, while she already had Khokand almost at her mercy. The process of conquest now moved rapidly. In 1868, after the defeat of Bokhara, Samarkand was occupied, and the Khanate of Khokand was entirely subjected in 1876. These campaigns had presented little difficulty owing to the immense advantage of the waterway, and the weakness of the Khanates. Khiva was the next state to be attacked. So inconsiderable was her fighting power considered to be that three small columns, operating from Orenburg, Ak Masjid (renamed Perovski), and Tashkent respectively, marched

into the oasis in 1873, without encountering any serious opposition.

By this great advance Russia had made a gigantic stride across Central Asia, and was actually in contact with the outlying provinces of Afghanistan. The Russian menace was now a reality.

In Afghanistan, for twenty years after the evacuation of Kabul by the British troops, Dost Mohamed had held his own. In 1848, hoping to regain Peshawar, he had dispatched a force of 4,000 cavalry to help the Sikhs against the British at the battle of Gujerat, but they had been ignominiously driven from the field by two squadrons of the Sind Irregular Horse. In 1855 he had opened up friendly relations with the British and, two years later, concluded a treaty of perpetual peace and friendship ; and upon the seizure of Herat by the Persians, he engaged to send a force to fight the invaders in return for a subsidy of £10,000 per month and a large supply of munitions. As it happened, British operations at Bushire and Muhmamareh brought Persia to her knees before the Amir had taken any action. Persia evacuated Herat and, just before his death in 1863, Dost Mohamed had the deep satisfaction of capturing the city, thus reuniting the whole of Afghanistan under his rule.

Conditions in Afghanistan change very slowly, and Shir Ali, who succeeded to the throne, had as chequered a career as his father. He established himself with difficulty at Kabul, and in 1867 he was forced to take refuge in Herat, owing to the successful rebellion of his half-brother Mohamed Afzal Khan. Fortunately this pretender died ; and the usurper's brother Mohamed Azim Khan, who was elected Amir, together with Abdur Rahman Khan, destined to play so large a part in Durand's life, were driven out.

"They hunted me over the passes and up to the Oxus stream,
We had just touched land on the far side, as we saw their spearheads gleam." [1]

[1] *The Amir's Soliloquy*, by Sir Alfred Lyall.

In 1868 Shir Ali had recovered his kingdom in its entirety and, to aid him in retaining it, the Viceroy presented him with £60,000, and a similar sum was again given in the following year. Friendly relations were now so well established that Shir Ali visited India to meet Lord Mayo at Umballa in 1869. The British Government at that period showed intense fear of incurring any responsibilities towards Afghanistan, although it should have been clear that definite undertakings were inevitable under the altered condition of affairs in Central Asia. Consequently, Shir Ali was not given the recognition of his dynasty that he urgently demanded. He received little more than vague assurances that we should discourage his rivals and support him strongly, but, owing to the splendour of his reception, which increased his prestige and power, he returned home fairly well gratified; and the charming personality of Lord Mayo made a lasting impression on the unpolished Afghan.

Meanwhile the British Foreign Office was busy and, in the course of the negotiations with Russia, Gortchakoff gave Lord Clarendon the assurance that Afghanistan lay "completely outside the sphere within which Russia might be called upon to exercise influence." This assurance was given in 1869, and, four years later, a roughly drawn boundary was agreed upon which covered all the provinces actually ruled by Shir Ali, and this Agreement[1] was undoubtedly of great benefit to the Amir. It certainly cost considerable efforts to negotiate as, for some time, the Russian Government held out over Badakshan and Wakhan.

On the other hand, Shir Ali's friendly feelings were

[1] The Agreement consisted of two dispatches, the first of which was written by Lord Granville and is dated 17. 10. 1872. In it the British Government claimed for Afghanistan as follows: "Badakshan with the dependent district of Wakhan; Afghan Turkistan comprising the districts of Kunduz, Khulm and Balkh, the northern boundary of which would be the line of the Oxus, from the junction of the Kokcha River to the post of the Khoja Saleh inclusive, on the high road from Bokhara to Balkh. The internal districts of Akcha, Sari Pul, Maimana, Shibargan and Andkhui, the latter of which would be the extreme Afghan frontier possession to the north-west, the desert beyond belonging to independent tribes of Turkomans."

In a dispatch dated January 31, 1873, addressed to the Russian Ambassador in London, Prince Gortchakoff agreed to accept the terms of the British dispatch.

sorely tried by the results of the decision to appoint a British arbitrator to decide upon the respective rights of Afghanistan and Persia in the remote province of Sistan. Owing to almost constant civil war in Afghanistan, Persia had been able to regain her hold of that province, and the arbitrator decided that she should keep the fertile area to the west of the Helmand, and assigned to Afghanistan the somewhat barren district on the eastern bank. No Afghans could believe that an arbitration by any human being could be decided on the merits of the case ; and consequently Shir Ali, true to type, considered that the award was a distinctly hostile act, as indeed did the Shah of Persia, who was equally dissatisfied ; and the Amir was strengthened in his opinion by the refusal of Lord Northbrook, the new Viceroy, to reopen the question.

On the occasion of a visit in 1873, the Afghan Envoy urged that the British Government should give written assurances binding them to assist the Amir in the event of Russian aggression on his territories. To this the reply was returned that, owing to the Agreement just signed with Russia, the British Government did not share the fears of the Amir, and that, in case he appealed to them, they would decide what action, if any, should be taken. The envoy was also informed that it was desired to station British officers at various centres, but he replied that such a proposal would create mistrust and apprehension in the minds of the Amir and his people. Finally, £50,000 and 5,000 Enfield rifles were presented to the Amir.

Reading between the lines, it seems that the friendship of Shir Ali was lost partly owing to his inability to understand the exact meaning of the Agreement made with Russia over his head, but mainly from lack of sympathy and failure on the part of the British to grasp his point of view and his difficulties with his own people. India, at that period, was dominated by the " close frontier " or " masterly inactivity " school, which did not permit officers to open up relations with their neighbours over the border and entirely forbade a British officer to step outside the

boundary of India. The result was ignorance where there should have been knowledge, and prejudice where there should have been sympathy.

Mr. Aitchison, the Foreign Secretary, was thoroughly imbued with this spirit, as Durand shows :

> His view is that we cannot check the Russian advance from this side. He would advocate a strong policy at home, but not any attempt to make our influence more directly felt at Kabul. He argues that any such attempt defeats its own object. The more we court the Amir the more his ideas of his own importance will rise, and until he feels himself in danger he will make no response. When he feels himself in danger he will come to us anyhow. Till then we must not shove ourselves on him in any way. Aitchison quoted as "perfectly just" Lord Lawrence's view on the matter. "Whichever power first occupies Afghanistan in force is certain sooner or later to have all the Afghans against her."
>
> He admits that we can march through the country as we could through India, and that we could hold it, if we had no one else to deal with ; but he thinks that the attempt to hold a position at Herat with 700 miles of enemy's country behind us must end in disaster. Russia's advance must be stopped by the ordinary operations of European diplomacy, not by any demonstrations in Asia. "Tell her that the moment she reaches such a point, we send our fleet into the Black Sea and raise her Asiatic subjects, but don't attempt to settle yourself in Herat, for the only result of that is to raise the Afghan against you and play Russia's game."

It may fairly be presumed that an official holding such views, who ignored the vital importance of personal intercourse, which counts for much more in uncivilized Asia than in Europe, would have maintained an unsympathetic and discouraging attitude in his dealings with the envoy, and was to a considerable extent responsible for the hostilities that resulted.

In the spring of 1876 Lord Lytton succeeded Lord Northbrook, "with instructions to take decided measures for counteracting the dangers of the Russian advance in Central Asia, and in particular for re-establishing our influence in Afghanistan."[1]

[1] "Life of Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall," p. 208.

The position was one requiring caution and patience, but the new Viceroy resolved to act and, almost immediately after taking office, communicated to Shir Ali his desire to dispatch a Mission under a British officer. This demand, as was inevitable, aroused mistrust and suspicion at Kabul, and the situation became more unfavourable when, at a conference held in January, 1877, between the British representative and the Afghan envoy at Peshawar, the latter stated that Shir Ali would never permit British officers to be stationed in Afghan territory. Lord Lytton insisted on this course, which was, indeed, most desirable in the interests of both Great Britain and Afghanistan, protection against Russia depending to a considerable extent on the British receiving accurate and timely information of the course of events. But Shir Ali wished to rule his people in the Afghan way, without interference or criticism from outside, and he also realized that he would have great difficulty in protecting British officers from the attacks of ghazis, or religious fanatics.

In April, 1877, Russia declared war on Turkey, and Great Britain, as a precautionary measure, ordered 5,000 Indian troops to be sent to Malta. The reply of Russia to this threat was the dispatch of a Mission to Kabul, accompanied by military activity on a large scale in Central Asia.

The Amir was much alarmed at the action of Russia, and, realizing that the reception of a Russian Mission would involve a definite breach with the British, weakly attempted to send an envoy to discuss matters, as in the case of the Viceroy of India. But General Kaufmann would allow no delay. He insisted on the reception of the Mission with full honours, and Shir Ali did not refuse to receive it. He should have been warned by the bitter experience of his father, but he lacked the qualities necessary to cope with this crisis.

It is to be noted that the day before the Mission entered Kabul the Russian envoy, General Stolietoff, received information that the Treaty of Berlin had been signed, and Kaufmann instructed him " not to go generally as far as

would have been advisable if war with England had been threatened." But these instructions arrived too late to save the situation, if indeed they were intended to do so.

Lord Lytton gave Shir Ali a final chance. He arranged to dispatch a Mission to Kabul, with the intimation that a refusal to grant it a free passage and an honourable reception, such as had been accorded to the Russian Mission, would be considered as a hostile act. Although the head of the Russian Mission had left Kabul without making a definite treaty, Shir Ali decided to refuse the British Mission permission to pass, and thereby lost his throne.

Lord Lytton, who realized that Shir Ali had been alienated long ago, "thanks to the uncorrected prosecution of the Gladstone-Lawrence policy," [1] rightly decided that it now only remained to take the necessary military and political measures. The military operations included an advance on Kandahar via Quetta in the south, an advance up the Kurram Valley towards Kabul in the centre ; and the expulsion of the Afghan troops from the Khaibar Pass in the north. At the same time a manifesto was issued, proclaiming the friendly disposition of the British Government towards the Afghan nation, and explaining the reasons for the invasion of the country.

The southern column under Sir Donald Stewart, using the same route as that followed in the First Afghan War, occupied Kandahar without encountering any opposition. The central column under Major-General Sir Frederick Roberts [2] advanced up the Kurram Valley and, by a daring attack on the left of the Afghans, who were very strongly entrenched on the Paiwar Kotal (or Pass), defeated the main Afghan army. The Khaibar column captured Ali Masjid, and then marched on to Jalalabad, which was occupied without opposition.

Upon the news of the victory at the Paiwar Kotal reaching Kabul, Shir Ali's authority collapsed and, after

[1] "Lord Lytton's Indian Administration," p. 284. This was the policy of the "closed frontier" referred to previously.

[2] I would take this opportunity to thank the Countess Roberts of Kandahar, who has read this, the following chapter and Chapter XIII.

releasing his son Yakub, whom he had imprisoned for nearly six years, he fled northwards to Afghan Turkistan. There he wrote to his Russian friends that " if any harm befall the Afghan Government, the dust of blame will certainly settle on the skirt of His Imperial Majesty's Government." From correspondence that was subsequently captured, it was proved that the Amir had been the friend and practically the ally of Russia for at least four years before his flight from Kabul, and this fact fully justifies the action of Lord Lytton.

The wretched fugitive was badly treated by General Kaufmann, who advised him to make friends with the British. This advice was, of course, not acted upon, and Shir Ali died at Mazar-i-Sharif only a few weeks later.

" And yet when I think of Shir Ali, as he lies in his sepulchre low,
How he died betrayed, heartbroken, 'twixt infidel friend and foe,
Driven from his throne by the English, and scorned by the Russian, his guest,
I am well content with the vengeance, and I see God works for the best." [1]

The position of the victors was much improved by the death of Shir Ali. Yakub Khan took advantage of it to open up relations with the British, in which he stated that his " worthy and exalted father had obeyed the voice of the Summoner, and had hastened to the region of the Divine Mercy."

After tedious pourparlers (in which Major Cavagnari played the leading part), Yakub Khan signed a treaty at Gandamak on May 26, 1879, by the terms of which he agreed to assign the districts of Pishin and Sibi, on which Quetta depended for its supplies, and Kurram, to the British; moreover, he accepted British control of the Khaibar Pass. The Amir also surrendered the right to maintain relations with foreign powers, in return for a promise of protection; and he finally agreed to receive a permanent British Mission at Kabul.

[1] From *The Amir's Soliloquy.*

The brilliant success attained by the British reacted on the situation in Central Asia as well as in India. Afghanistan had been brought definitely within the orbit of the Indian Empire ; Russia's friendship had been proved to be a reed, that pierced those who leant upon it ; and, lastly, a great advance had been made towards providing for India a strong, scientific frontier. The Russian attempt to wound the British had not merely failed, but had proved to be a distinct advantage to the Government of India.

Sir Louis Cavagnari was appointed Minister to Afghanistan, and was welcomed with much ceremony at Kabul. He must have realized the dangerous nature of his task, as he knew the Amir to be weak and changeable, and he was under no illusions about the Afghans who had not been crushed by us. Sir Frederick Roberts felt this and wrote, " my mind was filled with gloomy forebodings as to the fate of these fine fellows." [1]

Shortly after the arrival of the British Mission at Kabul, six regiments from Herat marched in and demanded their pay. The Amir, in the usual Afghan manner, refused to give the men more than a fraction of what was due to them. This injustice naturally irritated them ; they mutinied and stoned the Residency, which was held by an escort of the Guides, who fired on the mob. The fanaticism of the assailants was then aroused, and the Residency was attacked with blind fury by soldiers and Kabulis alike. Yakub gave no adequate help. He probably lost his nerve and then connived at the outrage. An heroic defence was made, in spite of the hopeless position; the Residency was stormed and Sir Louis Cavagnari, his staff and escort were massacred.

The news of this outrage stirred British opinion deeply, both in India and at home, and it was decided to take prompt action. Roberts was appointed to command the Kabul Field Force which was to advance on the Afghan capital from the Kurram Valley ; Sir Donald Stewart was ordered to reoccupy Kandahar and then to threaten Ghazni ; while a third force under Major-General Bright was

[1] " Forty-one Years in India," p. 177.

instructed to march through the Khaibar on Jalalabad and Kabul. It was important that the latter route should be opened, for the Kurram could not be depended on as lines of communication after mid-November, owing to the snow.

Durand, to his huge delight, was appointed Political Secretary to Sir Frederick Roberts. He travelled rapidly from Simla to Peshawar and thence to Kohat, the well-known frontier station.

I started with Brabazon and young Neville Chamberlain[1] to ride through to the next halting-ground—and so my trans-frontier service begins, riding in the Kurram Valley with a huge claymore of Mac's, and an almost equally huge double-barrelled pistol in my belt, *en route* for the Bala Hissar. On the 18th September we started from Thal and rode to Mandu, 12 miles, where we all slept together in a little mud hut after a most satisfactory dinner. The march was hot and barren, over rough stony country, and the claret which the A.D.C.s had luxuriously brought with them was most refreshing. It was necessary to march behind our baggage and servants as the road was dangerous, and this is a wearisome operation.

On the 19th we started for Badish Khel, 23 miles. The march was rough and hot, the country barren and stony as before. At the posts along the line the sepoys told us the people all round were in a state of ferment and insolence, and that day being the *Id* or Festival, some row was expected. We camped with the 5th Punjab Cavalry, and had a luxurious bathe in the Kurram, which, shallow as it was, carried me off my legs and rolled me along the stones unmercifully, to the delight of Brabazon and Chamberlain, who had prudently remained near the bank. We dined with the 5th and went to bed fully expecting to be fired into, but all passed quietly.

Marched from Badish Khel on the 20th into Kurram, the country still bare and stony but a trifle better, a few trees and a little occasional cultivation. Kurram itself is a beastly hole, surrounded by a desert plain. There I found Mac making arrangements for the advance. We inspected the transport mules together, and were not

[1] Later Major-General Sir John Brabazon and Colonel Sir Neville Chamberlain. Sir Charles MacGregor, already referred to in Chapter III, was one of the most distinguished officers of his generation. In addition to his many campaigns, he travelled widely in Persia and on the frontiers of the Indian Empire and organized the Intelligence Department. In his memory was founded a medal for military exploration, which I am proud to have been awarded.

gratified, nothing but bare bones and sores. They have been shamefully neglected.

Marched on 21st with Col. Hudson of the 28th to the Paiwar Kotal—the country barren and stony as ever, though I believe there are pleasant spots under the hills. The Paiwar is a magnificent position, if properly held; no troops in the world could carry it. The approach is hemmed in by commanding spurs and the road to the Pass itself winds up the almost perpendicular hill-side. Our horses, though the road is now much improved, could only do it in scrambling bursts of fifty yards or so. To our left the towering cliffs were shown me upon which the Afghans planted their batteries, a perfectly ridiculous position, as Dugald Dalgetty would have said, "like to scarts or seagulls upon a rock." They were hundreds of feet above the track.

At the Paiwar cantonment, a dreary, dusty, cold place cleared of pines, I found General Massy,[1] living like everyone else in log huts plastered with mud. After lunch we started again and rode on to Ali Khel. The view back from the Kotal over the Kurram Valley is very fine, the barrenness of the plain being toned down by distance, and the hills forming a fine amphitheatre. The road in here is good, having been made by the troops, and the country along its course a little prettier and more inhabited. We arrived after sunset, and the camp looked very picturesque with its numerous fires covering the plateaux below the last turn of the road. The little General received me very cordially and I dined with him.

The position of the troops here is very pleasant, and I should think healthy. They are on three plateaux surrounded by hills, some of which are well wooded It is, however, commanded from two or three points. It is very cold even now, my hands being almost too numb to write. In the winter it must be very bitter.

Durand immediately took up his duties and continues his interesting account:

Yesterday we had an interview with the Mustaufi Habibulla Khan and Vizier Shah Mohamed, who had come in from the Amir. It was a curious durbar, round a small camp table indifferently clean. The Mustaufi, or revenue officer, an ill-looking gentleman with no front teeth, sat on the right of the General, and below him the Vizier, a very cunning face, hard and eager. The Mustaufi

[1] Brigadier-General Dunham Massy was the "Redan" Massy of the Crimean War.

seemed depressed, and they did not broach the real object of their visit, which was to stay the advance of the force. They merely assured us of the Amir's fidelity to our alliance and presented letters from him abounding in professions. They said the Amir wished us to leave the punishment of the guilty to him, and not to come on. When told this was impossible, they said, "Then advance in great strength, or there may be another catastrophe. The Amir is powerless, and all our lives are unsafe." At the interview I suppose they saw their exertions to stay the advance would be useless.

The troops at Herat are reported to be again disorderly, but a letter from Ayub [1] says they have been quieted by partial payment. Four regiments have marched on Kabul from Turkistan. All over the country it appears to be the same. The troops, seeing the Kabul regiments obtained their pay by mutiny, are trying a similar game, and, as the Mustaufi says, there is no more money.

I spent the afternoon condensing an account of the interview into a long cipher telegram for Lyall. In the evening we heard that a telegraph party in front had been cut up by Ghilzais. We are sure to have this harassing warfare with the tribes, and even, I fear, in the Kurram Valley and towards Kohat. The state of affairs in Afghanistan generally is very serious. God grant we may escape any more national disasters. We need not fear the troops, but the long communications and rough country are great difficulties, and our transport is very defective.

23rd September. Evening.

Another interview with the Amir's envoys. They were more open this time. After compliments the Mustaufi opened the ball by assuring the General of the Amir's fidelity to our alliance, etc., etc. A short discussion then followed about snuff, the Vizier having asked leave to take a pinch, and, after this diversion, the Mustaufi began again. "The Amir," he said, "was our sincere friend, and would do whatever we wished, but His Highness could not conceal from himself that the Afghans feared an indiscriminate revenge, and he thought our advance might unite the country against us. Of course we could smash any force opposed to us, but the tribes might be exasperated, and supplies fail, which within a month of winter would be serious."

All things considered, the Amir advised us to stay our advance, or, if we must advance, to do so in such strength as to prevent all possibility of resistance and crush all rebellion. It was added that the

[1] Ayub Khan, brother of Yakub Khan, and the future victor of Maiwand.

Herat troops were doubtful, and that in Turkistan there were twenty-four regiments of infantry, six of cavalry and 56 guns, all of which had been foremost in mutiny. Abdur Rahman and the sons of Afzal Khan were only biding their time, and if Abdur Rahman managed to ingratiate himself with these troops, Herat and Turkistan would be permanently severed from Afghanistan. For this reason also the Amir advised us not to advance, in order that he might gain over the Herat and Turkistan people. He wished to disarm Shir Ali's regulars, keeping only 15,000—raise new levies, and punish all mutineers. He would show no mercy, but make an example which should be as conspicuous as the sun at noonday.

The General replied professing, rather unnecessarily I thought, perfect confidence in the Amir's friendship, and promising to consider his advice fully. "But," he said, "the three armies were advancing in such strength as to make all resistance impossible," that the Kandahar force was on its way to Kabul (at which the countenance of the envoys fell suddenly, and the Vizier faintly ejaculated, "Woe is me!"), and that there was more to be considered in the matter than the death of the English gentlemen and fifty or sixty men treacherously killed at Kabul. The honour of England was at stake, and he was convinced that the English people would never be satisfied so long as the bodies remained unburied or uncared for and no punishment was inflicted. Still the matter was important, and he would think over the Amir's advice. After a little complimentary twaddle the interview broke up.

The envoys are to be detained in camp until an answer can be prepared to the Amir's letter—i.e. in reality until the General advances. He and, apparently, the Viceroy have grave doubts of Yakub. If His Highness comes to meet us, he is to be spoken to plainly and watched. If not, efforts are to be made to secure him. So the General telegraphed to-day.

Some Ghilzai transport coming in. But there has been another small scrimmage this morning, three mahouts killed. Our communications are long, and we can only put about 5,000 men in line. The General thinks we shall have some fighting, and tells the Viceroy he is "fully alive to the difficulty of the position if we are allowed to enter Kabul unopposed." The Russians meanwhile threaten to march 20,000 men into the country and turn us out. Altogether it's a nice mess, and there is no foreseeing the end of it.

On the 24th nothing special occurred. Yesterday we had a final interview with the Amir's officials and they were dismissed. Neither was inclined to stay, the Mustaufi pleading hard work. Obviously they were in a hurry to be off, and could hardly be stopped from bolting

the same afternoon. They seemed to fear our arriving at Kabul as soon as themselves. This morning by sunrise they were gone. After dismissing these gentlemen, the General received a son of Padshah Khan, Ghilzai, who promised his father would join us in camp. He was a rough cub without manners or presence, but seemed pleased with his Rs.1,000.

Things are going on much as usual. Some mule drivers murdered on ahead, and yesterday the telegraph interrupted between Kohat and Thal. No doubt we shall have much trouble in these ways. The Peshawar column is helpless for want of transport, and we are not to draw any supplies from that direction. This complicates the matter, and makes the advance of our small force all the more hazardous an operation. Moreover the expected store to be found at Kushi has turned out non-existent. However, I suppose we can somehow manage to feed 5,000 men in Kabul.

There is a report that the three mutinous regiments there have been trying to induce the others, which number seven or eight, to make a stand, feeling they have a rope round their necks themselves. The answer was that the main body would wait and see how things went. If they saw a chance of defending Kabul or attacking us in any favourable position they would do so. The meaning of this is that if our force seems to them small they will fight, if not they will submit. Our small numbers may tempt them. I sincerely hope so.

That the Amir's officials are against us heart and soul I have no doubt. Some of the Vizier's men have been reviling Allah-u-Din, Ghilzai, as a *Kafir* (infidel) for making terms with us. They were confidential men, sent to see him, and of course expressed their master's opinion. I should not be surprised to hear that the Amir has bolted from Kabul when the Mustaufi gets back. As it is the report goes that his people are removing their families and effects.

27th September.

Marched to the Shuturgardan Pass; rough stony work the first part of the way, over the dry bed of a stream. Just beyond Jaji Thána I saw my first shot fired. A man came in with news that 2,000 Mangals were holding the pass and meant to fight. This was not much believed, but a halt was ordered, the 28th were ordered to close up, and a party of the 5th P.C. were sent on to reconnoitre. The latter soon found there was something, and we heard a pretty smart rattle break out ahead. Vousden,[1] who was in command,

[1] Afterwards Colonel Vousden, V.C.

had his horse shot. Supports were then pushed on, including a small party of the 92nd who were with us, and a messenger was sent forward over the hills to Karatiga to turn out the troops there on the Mangals' rear. We advanced gradually, the flanking parties clearing the way, until we reached a narrow, rough bit of road where fir-clad spurs ran down close to the stream. We had halted here, and I was just thinking how close we were round the General in a lump —a lot of native tag-rag as well as his escort and staff—when there was a crash from a knoll above us, about 200 or 250 yards off, and a shower of bullets came whizzing about our heads. There was a wild stampede for cover, but only one man, Dr. Townsend, had been hit, and we merely got a few dropping shots afterwards.

The Karatiga troops were soon out, and it was very pretty to see them driving the Mangals from point to point. About forty are said to have been killed. We lost five men of the 3rd Sikhs, who were surrounded. One of these died well. He was shot and knew the devils would finish him. Handing over his rifle and belt to another man with him, he said, "Run, my brother, run : it is Government property." A moment later he was cut to pieces.

Arrived at Shuturgardan very late in consequence of this business, and bitterly cold. Josephs of the Telegraph met me and took me off to dinner. He seemed to know all our people, and to have met me at Abu. I did not remember him a bit, but was thankful for the food. I fell dead asleep immediately after it, and when I woke found Kulloo had done the same and never pitched my tent. The night was bitterly cold.

28th September.

Marched to Kushi, a rough troublesome march. Just before reaching camp there is a quaint and rather pretty view of the village and river bed, but, alas for our notions of the fertile Logar Valley. From the camp, whence the river bed was invisible, not a tree or a blade of grass could be seen. Found the Amir had come in, bolting from Kabul on pretence of taking a walk.

29th Sept. to 2nd Oct., Kushi.

Rather seedy. Two interviews with the Amir, who did not prepossess me. He is by no means the fine young soldier I used to imagine him ; a weak vacillating face, pleasant enough at times, but not trustworthy or in any way impressive. The type is strongly Jewish. He seemed very nervous and fidgety, but cheered up a little towards the end.

2nd Oct.

Sick and feverish ; forced to march, after a bad night of it in a *dooly*, a very trying march. I was incessantly sick all the way and arrived utterly exhausted at Zurghun Shahr.

3rd to 7th Oct.

Lying very ill with fever and jaundice. Saw nothing, therefore, of Baker's fight on the Chaharasia heights, a very pretty business. I could only lie and hear the guns, and long to be out. I have had a really bad time of it, thinking more than once it was all over from weakness.

7th to 11th Oct.

After arrival at our camping ground a mile from Kabul, I began to pick up sharp, and on removal to this ground on the Siah Sang heights progressed still better. Yesterday I found myself able to walk about and eat, and to-day feel quite well again, thank God. It has been a hard day, the General having decided on strong measures to-morrow, and a lot of work resulting. But I must leave proper notes for to-morrow, as I am off immediately to see the Amir.

No letters for some days, and then only a stray one. It is a hard part of campaigning, the hard part indeed, for to a healthy man all else is delightful.

Roberts, who shared the unfavourable opinion of Yakub Khan entertained by Durand, marched steadily on towards Kabul, realizing that any delay would be fatal to success. Owing to the lack of transport, he was obliged to send back his mules and camels to bring up General Macpherson's brigade. On October 5, one month after the receipt of the news of the massacre in India, the British had reached Chaharasia, a small village only twelve miles from Kabul, situated at the foot of a rugged range.

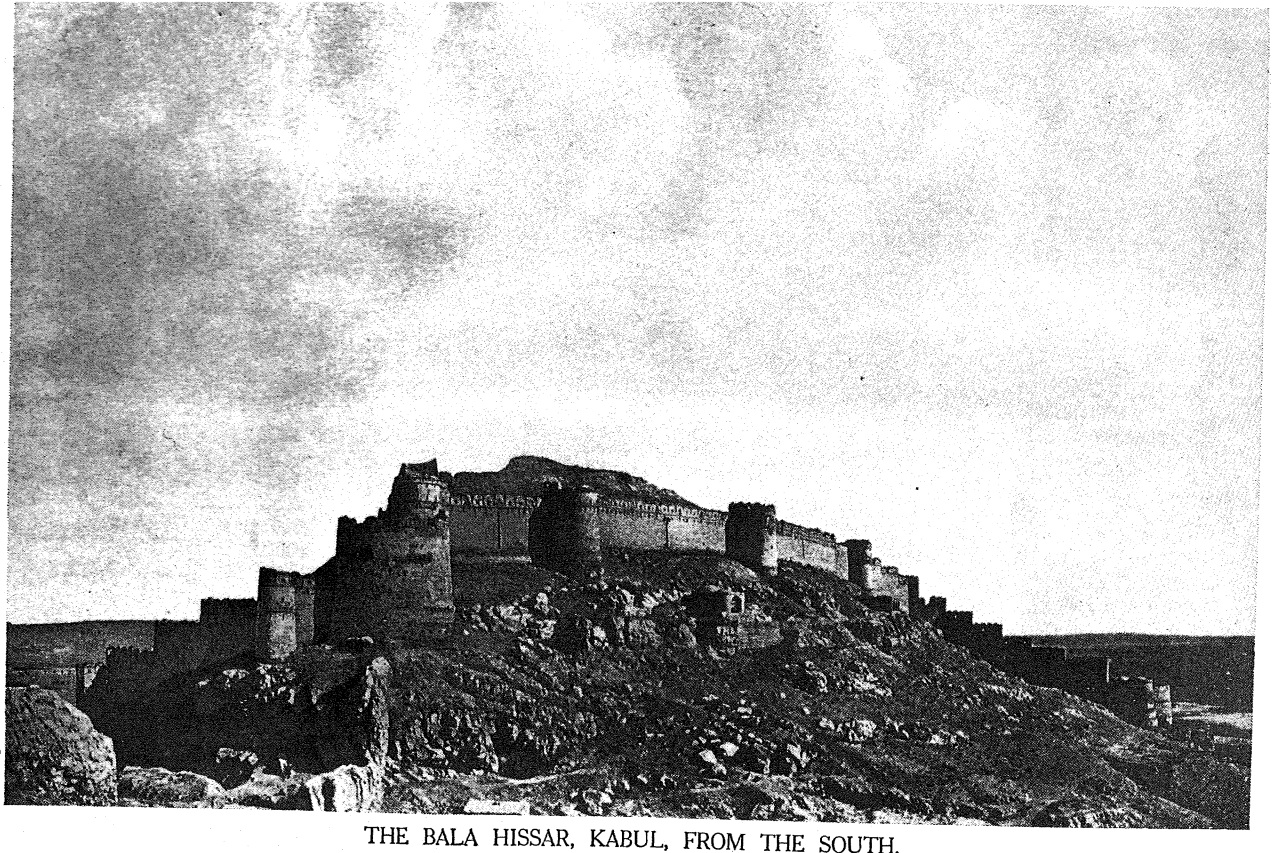
Yakub was in close touch with events, and one of his uncles who visited him evidently received orders to oppose the advance of the British by occupying the range with some thousands of regulars equipped with guns and with numerous tribesmen. The position was a very strong one, the gorge through the range being quite impassable. Although Macpherson's brigade, which constituted one-half of his force of infantry, was behind and unable to take

part in an action, the gathering of tribesmen warned Roberts that he must attack quickly, or else be faced by vast numbers. The enemy's right offered the best chance of success, and, after a feint on their left, the Afghans were driven off the range and by nightfall were in full flight. This victory, gained by the admirable qualities displayed by all ranks, broke down the resistance of the Afghans, and Kabul lay at the mercy of the victors, whose leader had displayed fine qualities of daring but sound leadership, which brought him in due course to the supreme command of the British army.

A proclamation was drafted to which Durand, who never failed to exercise an independent and critical judgment, took exception.

It seemed to me so utterly wrong in tone and in matter that I determined to do my utmost to overthrow it. The complete setting aside of the Amir, the stilted language, and the absurd affectation of preaching historical morality to the Afghans, all our troubles with whom began by our own abominable injustice, made the paper to my mind most dangerous for the General's reputation. Accordingly, on the morning of the 11th I went to his tent and had it out, paragraph by paragraph. He did not quite like it, but gave in, and commissioned me finally to draft another proclamation. This I did, and though I do not admire it, for it was written very hurriedly, and besides no proclamation was required that I can see except about arms, it is I think a little less objectionable.

On the evening of the 11th it was decided that, after our formal entry into the Bala Hissar next day with the Amir, this should be read. So matters stood when, early yesterday morning, I was surprised to hear Yakub had walked up with a couple of servants. He said he wished to see the General, and on being admitted immediately tendered his abdication. His life, he said, had been a miserable one and he could bear it no longer. Better be a grass-cutter in the English camp than ruler of Afghanistan. "You see," he said, "what the people are. Who would rule over them? I have fought battles for the Amirship like my father and grandfather before me, but it is all over now. I have done with them. Let me go to India, or London, anywhere you will, so long as I leave Afghanistan for ever. They rebelled against my father and abandoned him in his need. Now they have rebelled against me. I have not one friend in the country, not one friend."



THE BALA HISSAR, KABUL, FROM THE SOUTH.

From Oskar von Niedermayer's "Afganistan." By permission of Karl W. Hiersemann, Leipzig.

The General begged him to think well over it, placed a tent at his disposal, and promised to see him at ten o'clock. Accordingly we came together again soon after ten; Hastings,[1] the General and myself, and the Amir was brought in. He could not be induced to reconsider the matter again, or to accompany the General to the Bala Hissar. The man seemed utterly broken, his eyes red and swollen, his body bowed helplessly forward, with prostration in every line, and his voice tearful and quivering. At last the General agreed to his not going to the Bala Hissar, and promised to send in his abdication to the Viceroy, but said he must remain titular Amir until the answer came. He said he would do as he was told, but that he would not leave our camp or see his people again, excepting his three boys, whom he wishes to accompany him into retirement. Poor wretch, whatever his fidelity towards us, which is doubtful, he is to be pitied. To me it was inexpressibly touching to see him so utterly fallen, and afterwards on going to his tent to find him lying in a corner with eyes like a hunted beast's.

I told him of the arrest of his people, and he seemed anxious to know whether anything had been found to incriminate them. This was in the evening. Shortly afterwards MacGregor gave me a letter, found in the *zenana*, which tends to incriminate himself. It was from Mohamed Hassan, of Jalalabad, acknowledging the news of the outbreak and of Cavagnari's death, and hoping all enemies of the true faith would similarly plunge headlong into the whirlpool of destruction. It looks as if he had sent round a circular of congratulation. But it *may* have been only his Minister's doing. His own interest was bound up with the welfare of the Mission, and he knew it.

Meanwhile, at noon, we formed a procession for the formal entry into Kabul, young Musa Khan going in lieu of his father. Troops lined the road all the way. Nothing was said in the proclamation about arresting the four Ministers, this paragraph being left out in consequence of the Amir's action. But at the close of the performance they were informed they must remain. All took it quietly, though they looked rather blue, and Zakaria Khan began to pray. Afterwards I believe they let out to Hastings, but at the time I was surprised at their coolness and want of excitement.

I was much struck with one thing while the reading was going on. Among all the sirdars present, there was not a single one who looked other than most common and low, not one fine or aristocratic face among them all. They were, I fancy, much disappointed at

[1] Afterwards Colonel Hastings, C.B.

the tone of the proclamation, having hoped to find a chance for themselves.

On the 15th I went down to the Residency, and got the Subadar Mohamed Karim Khan, who was present at the beginning of the attack, to show me the whole place. It is entirely commanded by the upper Bala Hissar at a range of about 80 to 100 yards, and quite incapable of real defence. The approach is through narrow, winding lanes between mud walls. The main building has fallen in from fire, leaving only the side walls and corners standing. Of course all the walls, inside and out, are riddled with bullets. I saw some charred books, human bones, etc., etc., but little had been exhumed Two graves are shown outside as those of Jenkins and Hamilton, but doubt is thrown on the story. Cavagnari and Kelly are said to be under the ruins of the main building. Hamilton seems to have behaved nobly, charging out time after time, sword in hand, to clear the gun, which the mutineers had run up close to the walls. He succeeded, they say, in driving the gunners off three times, almost single-handed, but at last fell by the gun covered with wounds. All honour to him for a gallant death.

On the 16th we had a most unpleasant excitement. At sixteen minutes past one there was a report in camp as if the signal gun had gone off. I stepped out of my tent to find out what had happened, and saw an immense column of dense brown smoke rising many hundred feet into the air above the Bala Hissar. From its base, columns of a still denser colour were rolling out horizontally over the city It was obvious that a big magazine had gone, and as the place was known to be full of powder, ordnance stores and small arm ammunition it seemed probable that the damage done to the citadel and town would be tremendous. The Amir stated the amount at 400 tons, and 30 million rounds of rifle ammunition. The latter is probably an exaggeration, but there were some millions.

Shafto, the Commissary of Ordnance, who was blown up, poor fellow, with some Gurkhas, told me the day before that he had counted 800,000 rounds of English-made cartridges, and in one shed alone 500,000 rounds of native make, while there were many sheds uncounted. From the time of the first explosion the rattle of rifle cartridges, shells, small quantities of powder, and other stores, was incessant. It sounded like a very severe general action. In the afternoon I went out to try for a sketch. I was just finishing the eastern line of rampart when a second and still more violent explosion took place, and half the line disappeared before my eyes, leaving a tremendous breach. I caught the shape of the smoke column as

rapidly as I could, and have a very accurate pencil sketch of the actual explosion which I am thinking of sending to the Home papers. From this time, four o'clock, the discharges of small arms ammunition and other combustibles went on more merrily than ever. Great stretches of rampart were down, and the gateway blocked. The heat and fire of missiles of all sorts made any attempt at rescue hopeless, and the big magazine remained as yet untouched.

This business has determined the General on totally destroying the Bala Hissar, and moving the force for the winter into the Sherpur Cantonments under the Bemáru heights. He fears the lower Bala Hissar may have underground stores of powder. We shall thus be near the site of our old cantonment of 1842. *Absit omen.* The cantonment is strongly fortified this time, and may, according to the General, be made unapproachable. There is cover for us all, he says, and good water.

Politically things are going rather queerly in my opinion. The Amir is a little more cheerful, but utterly refuses to sign a letter or give an order as Amir. " Anything you please as plain Yakub Khan," he says, " but nothing as Amir."

The arrest of Yahia Khan and the Ministers was, I think, premature. There was no chance of their bolting, and there is not a particle of proof against them. Of course even in Afghanistan the summary arrest of a whole Ministry throws things rather out of gear, and we are now suffering the consequences. No one can help us effectually, as they could have done, in getting supplies. We have only ten days' in store, and the prospect is hardly satisfactory.

The British, as in the case of the First Afghan War, had overcome armed resistance in the field and had captured Kabul, and, like their predecessors, they were soon to be besieged in their cantonment outside Kabul.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INVESTMENT OF THE SHERPUR CANTONMENT

The Afghan youth have reddened their hands,
As a falcon dyes its talons in the blood of its quarry.
They have made their white swords rosy with blood,
As a bed of tulips blooming in summer.

—FROM AN AFGHAN POEM.

THE position in the autumn of 1879 closely resembled that already recorded in the chapter on the First Afghan War. The creaking machinery of government had broken down hopelessly owing to the abdication of the Amir and the arrest of his Ministers, and the British only held Kabul, Kandahar and the country round those centres. The Afghan army had been defeated, but not the Afghan people. They naturally resented the seizure of their capital, the deportation of their Amir and the death of thousands of their fellow-countrymen. Had the British appointed another Amir and then marched back to India, after exacting retribution, the problem would have been simplified, but, in the absence of a strong candidate for the throne, no immediate decision could be taken, and no assurances given to the prominent sirdars.

This state of affairs naturally caused unrest and prepared the xenophobe and brave Afghans for an outbreak of fanatical feeling, which was started by the fervent sermons of the venerated Mulla Mashk-i-Alam or "Fragrance of the World," who denounced the "infidels" in every mosque and started a movement that rapidly became a *Jihad* or Holy War.

Durand writes on October 25 :

I am concerned about our want of hold on the country. We really get no information, and there is no government ; nor do I believe there will be until we have a definite scheme laid down. At present

no one trusts us ; our friends, if we have any, are afraid to come forward, foreseeing hard times hereafter if we leave the country. We have, so far as I can see, no means whatever of bringing influence to bear on Herat and the outlying provinces. Everyone knows that our outside margin before the winter is six weeks, and that we shall not be able to do much meanwhile. Winter will no doubt keep the country apparently quiet, or should do so ; but as for our really governing it, all I can say is that the means do not suggest themselves to me nor, so far as I can see, to anyone else. Now that the Mustaufi and Vizier are in custody, there is not a man to be found of any real administrative experience or ability. The Barakzai sirdars seem a useless, feeble set of people—bar, perhaps, Vali Mohamed, who is a dangerous adviser. There is nothing to hold by, no men, no information ; no great parties, or interests. I dare say things will come right as time goes on, but just now the prospect seems to me by no means satisfactory ; and I dread a condition of drift for the sake of the north and west. There is no saying what devilry may be brewing there.

Meanwhile the troops took up their quarters in the Sherpur Cantonment :

Moved down to Sherpur to-day. It was a hot ride, but now, ten p.m., I find the water in my jug coated with ice, and the air outside is bitterly cold ; certainly much colder than on the Siah Sang heights.

The General goes to Butkhak the day after to-morrow, taking me with him. General Macpherson precedes him with a brigade to-morrow, or rather more than a brigade. Only the 92nd and 5th Gurkhas remain here. This seems rash, particularly as, according to Daud Shah,[1] the hillsides and villages are full of armed men, soldiers who opposed us at Chaharasia, and are game for anything. He says they are alarmed by our proceedings, and will not come in, and he is confident that, unless amnestied or otherwise dispersed, they will give us serious trouble in the winter. Gough's approach from Kushi makes our movement less rash. We are to reconnoitre the Latabank road ; the General then returns, while Macpherson tries to open up communications with Bright.

4th November.

Nothing particular on the 1st. On the 2nd we rode out to Butkhak, and after breakfast with General Macpherson started to explore the Lataband Pass. Mac mounted me, and the fifteen miles

[1] The Afghan Commander-in-Chief.

between this and Butkhak were covered in little over an hour. The trip to the Lataband Kotal was tiring for the horses. The pass is open, and in many parts the road was fair enough, but the last part was a stiff climb. From the Kotal we had a fine view across the plain eastward, a snowy peak or two of the Safed Kuh jutting up over the hills on our right. Daud Shah assured me he could see the Khaibar Hills, but my eyes were unequal to this.

On the 3rd we were just starting for a five-mile ride along the Khurd Kabul road and pass when Daud Shah proposed to go round into the Khurd Kabul from the eastward. The whole distance, he said, was only fourteen miles. We started accordingly, and a rough day's work we had of it. The distance was thirty-two miles, and the road lay almost all the way along the bed of the stream, which we constantly crossed and re-crossed, our horses floundering among the boulders and water-holes. In every shady corner the stream was already well coated with ice. In many places the rocks rose precipitously on either side, and scarcely gave room for a horse to turn between them. One could well understand the destruction of our people in '42. To plunge into these rugged defiles without previously turning, and clearing or holding, the heights was to ensure the most murderous disasters. A few score of matchlock men among the rocks firing quietly down into the blocked mass below must do fearful execution. I could not help thinking at every such spot of the poor English ladies, many in sore sorrow for the loss of husband or brother, many perhaps great with child, riding through the ice and snow and the shower of Afghan bullets. God's curse on the cowardly scoundrels!

On 21st [writes Durand], shortly after settling into Sherpur, Baker went out with a force of 1,300 foot, three squadrons of cavalry, and six guns, to help Sirdar Mohamed Hassan Khan in the collection of forage in the Maidan district, and also to strike at any armed bodies who might come within reach. There was talk of old Mashk-i-Alam having got some men together in Wurduk and intending a march northward. On the 22nd we followed, the General, MacGregor, myself and the A.D.C.s. Our first day's march ended at Upper Arghandi, fifteen miles from here, where we found our camp pitched. The views on the road were pretty and, in parts, very fine. The Chardeh valley is pleasing in itself, and when you get near Arghandi, the look back across the hill slopes and blue higher ranges to the grand white line of the Hindu Kush is beautiful in the extreme. Arghandi was bitterly cold, a keen wind blowing, and everything frozen hard.

On the 23rd we rode in to Maidan, six to nine miles according to various estimates. The camp overlooked a fine valley with branches running up into the hills in various directions. We found Baker in camp. He had received news that some of Mashk-i-Alam's people had crossed over from Wurduk into the Nirikh valley, and Bahadur Khan, a leading Ghilzai of Nirikh, head of the Umar Khel section, had refused to come in when ordered. The General at once sent off Turner with a squadron of the 9th Lancers and one of the 14th Bengal Lancers to surround Bahadur Khan's village and bring him in. They came on the village suddenly, and while spreading out at a canter to surround it, were met by a sharp fire from the village itself, which was strongly fortified, with high corner towers, and from the hill in its rear. Three horses were killed, and the two squadrons retired out of range. Next morning at daybreak the camp was struck and, leaving the tents and baggage in a small fort close by, we marched on Nirikh. After a weary four hours behind the column, we arrived at the pleasant village, to find it and its neighbourhood entirely deserted. The General thereupon ordered its destruction, and that of the other Umar Khel village near it.

I think this sort of thing is wrong, and impolitic. It causes deep and lasting resentment, and it will not quiet the country. These people have no cohesion or subordination, and though the well-to-do may be frightened by the example, there will never be wanting a few reckless fellows, with little to lose, who will find the temptation to snipe at small bodies of our men quite irresistible. It is only natural. Were England conquered by Afghans I should feel the same. "Oh, damn Jones's haystack, let's have a shy." And then the unhappy Jones would suffer while I sat and smiled on the summit of a neighbouring hill.

Roberts was unable to procure accurate information but he gradually learned that large bodies of men were assembling from every direction, and he decided to try and deal with them in detail. He did not, at first, realize the enormous numbers concerned in the rising, but he prudently ordered reinforcements in the form of the Guides Corps to march on Kabul as quickly as possible.

His plan of dealing with the Afghans was this. Macpherson was to march slowly towards Arghandi, where the Maidan men were said to be, and try to hold them until Baker worked round to their rear via Chaharasia. He was then to attack and drive them on Baker.

Before this plan could be carried out Macpherson received information that a force of Kohistanis was marching down from the north to join the Maidan men. He determined to prevent the junction, and on the 10th succeeded in placing himself in a good position between them, just in the nick of time. The Kohistanis attacked, but were thrown back with loss, and the Maidan men held aloof, retreating southward after the fight without firing a shot. We heard Macpherson's guns and rode out towards him in the afternoon with some guns and cavalry, hoping to get a chance at the fugitives, but we saw nothing.

Next day Macpherson was to carry out the original programme. Baker having arrived at Maidan, Massy with two squadrons of the 9th Lancers, one of the 14th Bengal Lancers, and four guns of the Field Artillery was to cruise about the Chardeh valley on this side, and look out for a chance. He got more than he expected. About ten o'clock we started with a small escort and rode out again by the Khirskhana Pass towards Macpherson. After going a mile or two to the westward, we suddenly saw the smoke and heard the sound of guns on our left front, and riding up to the spot, found Massy trying to check a large force of the enemy, which was advancing from the cover of some villages near the foot of the hills. Avoiding, either by design or accident, the snare set for them, they had retired from Macpherson in a south-easterly direction instead of south-west, and were rather between him and Kabul than between him and Maidan.

The enemy came on well in heavy masses covered by a fairly regular line of skirmishers about two miles in length, the red and white standards of their mullas dotting the line in front, and a few horsemen showing on their rear and flanks. They had no guns, but were obviously well supplied with rifles, for even at eight hundred yards, their distance when we came up, there was a ceaseless singing of bullets over our heads. The accurate fire of the guns had no effect on them. Seeing that we had no infantry, they poured steadily forwards without a check or pause, shouting and firing. It is rather a Homeric simile, but their numbers were so great that there was a continuous roar like the distant sound of the sea. According to MacGregor, they could not have been less than 10,000.

Seeing that no impression could be made, the guns retired, and the enemy having advanced into open ground suited for the action of cavalry, the 9th and 14th were called up for a charge. It was an exciting moment. I saw them wheel into line, break into a trot, and disappear in a cloud of dust. A few seconds of anxiety followed, and then I saw what I hope I may never see again. Our squadrons

came out in a shapeless mass—the 9th on the right, the 14th on the left—utterly broken and galloping *ventre à terre*. Unhappily the ground in our rear was cut up by numerous watercourses, and this greatly impeded and discomposed our men, who found the enemy pressing them pretty close. Eventually the guns, being hurriedly driven into a deep ditch fringed with poplars, stuck fast and had to be abandoned.

Thinking even a civilian might be of use in such a business, I stayed behind with MacGregor, and was for a time pretty smartly peppered, and the villagers gave us a volley at about thirty yards to increase the excitement. After this we retired steadily, trying in vain to find the General. Our first line was on the city by the Deh Mazang Pass, but thinking the 72nd would be coming up to our support from cantonments by the Khirskhana, MacGregor changed his line in that direction. On arrival at the gorge we found Joey Deane had stopped and drawn up some forty gunners and 14th men with a few of the 9th. Here we waited some time—Deane, MacGregor, Liddell, Badcock, Sir M. Kennedy,[1] Hogg and myself. Liddell and Badcock had been with us throughout.

We were not molested, the enemy streaming by in great numbers, with drums beating and flags waving, towards Deh Mazang. After an hour or so we saw on our right front the head of Macpherson's baggage making for cantonments, and it then occurred to MacGregor that we might collect a few men of the baggage guard and try to work round into the enemy's rear, and retake the guns if not strongly guarded. We accordingly moved forward, and picking up seventy men or so of the Gurkhas, 67th and 3rd Sikhs, advanced across country by our left. Hashim Khan with some sowars joined us, and after a time we found the guns, fortunately unguarded. None had been dragged far. They were sent in to camp.

MacGregor then made for Deh Mazang to join the General, who had checked the enemy in the gorge with the 72nd, and induced them to sheer off still farther to their right behind the Bala Hissar hill. I remained with the party of infantry, which had no officer, and did not reach cantonments till nine o'clock, having overtaken Massy and gone round with him via Deh Mazang.

This action made a deep impression on the young civilian, and one incident of the charge of the 9th Lancers is embodied in the poignant lines reproduced in facsimile on

[1] Lieut.-General in charge of Transport and Supply.

page 118, which reveal the depth of feeling that the horrors of warfare with savage enemies inspired.[1]

MacGregor reported the valuable services rendered by Durand on this occasion, and Sir Frederick Roberts noted on the medal roll, "Mr. Durand was under fire on 11th December, 1879, on which occasion he behaved with conspicuous gallantry." Durand, who never ceased to be a soldier at heart, was very proud of these remarks, and he told me that he valued the medal and the recommendation that gained it for him, more than any other decoration he was given. I also recollect his telling me that he rode armed with a curved sword which he had little idea how to handle, that a man cut at his thigh, but fortunately only hit him with the flat and not the edge of the sword, as he could not entirely ward off the blow. His hand was much too large for the hilt, as is almost invariably the case with Europeans using Oriental swords, so that he bruised it severely, and was unable to write for some time after.

The reverse in the Chardeh valley was followed by attacks on peaks occupied by the Afghans close to the cantonment. But the ever-increasing masses of the enemy, compared by a signalling officer to crowds at Epsom on Derby Day, proved to Roberts that the odds were too great, and he acted accordingly.

The immense numbers and determined behaviour of the Afghans were such as to extort respect, and the General finally resolved upon a measure which a week before he and all of us would have looked upon as impossible. Our men were withdrawn on all sides, the Bala Hissar abandoned, and by sunset the whole force was concentrated in cantonments, expecting an attack. Even the walled garden occupied by the 5th Punjab Cavalry was given up, with some thousand *maunds* of bhoosa and other stores, though lying only 600 or 700 yards from cantonments. By six o'clock in the morning the telegraph line was cut, though fortunately not before an urgent appeal

[1] Durand copied these verses for my sister, Miss Ella Sykes, and the letter describing the incidents commemorated is reproduced in facsimile on page 117. Major-General Sir Henry Bushman informs me that two young officers, Ricardo and Hearsay, were killed in this action, and that the latter was probably the officer commemorated.

for reinforcements had gone to the Viceroy, and we were fairly shut up behind our entrenchments. Then we began to feel the inconvenience of having occupied this large and straggling position. It required all our force to defend it, and not a man could be spared for operations in the field. Indeed the greatest fears were felt for the cantonment itself.

We had unwisely left all the enclosures and garden walls about it untouched, and had made no attempt to defend the open side to the north, but now a line of entrenchment and abattis was pushed on with feverish haste day and night, and the gates blocked with beams, gun limbers, boxes of earth, and other obstructions. We have had rumours of an attack every morning and evening, but the enemy have confined themselves to desultory sniping and useless demonstrations on the Siah Sang and Asmai hills. And yesterday news arrived that Gough's brigade was marching up from Gandamak.

The enemy meanwhile have occupied the city and Bala Hissar, the Kizilbash[1] alone holding aloof. The houses of the Hindus and of the sirdars with us in the cantonment have been gutted, and we have even been offered terms—Vali Mohamed to be Amir, and hostages to be given by us until the return of Yakub Khan. At present, however, Musa Khan, Yakub's son, is the Amir elect.

It is very humiliating altogether, and very ludicrous after all our self-satisfaction and swagger, to find ourselves so easily thrown behind entrenchments, even if the General's estimate of the enemy, 30,000 men, be correct, which I much doubt. The country is wholly gone and cannot be recovered this winter, if at all. We should, however, be able to shake ourselves free and recover the city by Christmas. The enemy are, I think, melting now, though small fresh contingents march in occasionally. But the country is gone, and all our work is before us again for next year. It will be a great blow at home and in India.

Our position, though not one I believe of serious danger, has been more or less troublesome. Bullets drop about cantonments all day, and men are hit occasionally. Our gateway, being known as the General's quarters, is specially saluted, and though I think most of the enemy's missiles are slugs and bits of telegraph wire, the sharp prolonged ping of the conical bullet is common enough. You cannot walk across cantonments without seeing a dozen whip up the dust.

Our losses during the last ten days have been sensible—over 200

[1] The Kizilbash are of Persian descent and belong to the Shia division of Islam.

men *hors de combat*, and about 10 officers killed, some fine fellows among them, notably Cook of the Gurkhas and Butson of the 9th Lancers. The latter was much loved by his men. He fell in a charge on the 13th, his last words being, "Now, boys, for the honour of the old Ninth!"

The immortal Tommy Atkins says "it's the first time he ever heard of a bloody General being confined to barracks," which has germs of wit. I derive infinite and exquisite enjoyment from Tommy in his various forms, partly, I fear, from his quaint use of profane language.

To my mind the rising preaches annexation more strongly than ever, if we wish to preserve exclusive influence in Afghanistan. Whether this be worth while is another matter; I greatly doubt it. But if we are to preserve exclusive influence here we must annex. No one can hold the country in our interest, for no one can be strong except by heading the popular feeling against us. All the dangerous districts, too, lie within reach, in the eastern part of the country. Retirement now means the acceptance of a far worse position than we had before. An unnecessary and costly war will have ended in our having less weight in Afghanistan than we had in 1878.

To-day, 23rd December, about 6 a.m., a light flared up on the Asmai Hill, and our right and left were simultaneously attacked, though with no great spirit. I woke at the sound of the musketry from our gateway, and turned out rather reluctantly by candlelight. Then a tremendous roll of musketry began in the Bemáru direction and went on for some minutes. After a time, when it grew light, I went off with Hastings and Ramsay to the Bemáru Hills to watch the fighting, and there we remained till ten o'clock by Hugh Gough's picket. The enemy were in considerable numbers, but scattered in parties of two or three hundred, and made no attempt at a combined advance. The fire, however, was very heavy, particularly from a low line of wall at the northern foot of the hill. Gough was hit just before our arrival by a spent shot which tore through the breast of his posteen and knocked him down. Shortly afterwards I got a sharp rap on the arm from a spent Enfield bullet. The singing of missiles over our heads was incessant.

At ten we returned to breakfast, the firing being then continuous all round, particularly about the 72nd gate, which was heavily peppered throughout the day. About one o'clock, the cavalry having gone up to the gorge, we sallied out again, and remained the whole afternoon on the western hill watching the progress of the fight. On our right there was only desultory sniping except at the S.W. bastion.

Here some dozen or so of the enemy had come up within 250 yards under cover of some ruined walls, and fired steadily all day. To our front there were some hundreds, and the roll of musketry was incessant, Gorham occasionally giving them a shell or round shot, which seemed to produce little effect. Our rear was clear.

On our left the enemy were in great force among the forts and villages, but when the cavalry and horse artillery with a few companies of foot moved out, they gave ground, and manœuvred by our left towards the Siah Sang heights. The cavalry went right round them by the north. About four o'clock there was a general retirement on the part of the enemy towards the city, those coming from our left being considerably slated as they streamed across the open on to the heights. Then our infantry occupied the abandoned villages, and our cavalry crowned the Siah Sang. Shortly after four o'clock we blew up the big Mir Akhor fort. Dundas and Nugent of the Engineers were destroyed by the explosion. Both were good soldiers. I felt sure the explosion was premature from the position of the men round it. Murdoch of the Engineers was wounded in the same place, trying to force his way into a room. Three men were inside. He pistolled one, the other two fired simultaneously and dropped him.

After this I saw a very pretty piece of fighting on the enemy's part. They had all streamed into the city, or neighbouring trees and gardens. Our cavalry formed on the Siah Sang heights. Suddenly a few horsemen, whom at first I took for our own videttes, galloped up to our old saluting battery from the west. After taking a good look, a few dismounted and fired at our men from behind the mound. The rest went downhill again, and in a moment some hundreds of infantry were swarming up the western and north-western spurs. Our cavalry tried carbine fire, but could not stop them, and finally retired at a gallop, losing some men. Gambier of the 5th was badly hit. The enemy then crowned the heights. It was a very neat piece of work, quick and steady, and did them credit. They quite appreciate the helplessness of cavalry unsupported.

Thus ended the attack on the Sherpur Cantonment. Afghans, on such occasions, depending mainly on food brought from their own homes, cannot remain in the field for long. They were therefore bound to attack the cantonment, where the British firing from cover were able to inflict heavy losses, without suffering more than a few

casualties. As a result of the complete failure of the Afghan attack, the immense force, aggregating perhaps 50,000 men or more, suddenly melted away, and the besieged troops, sallying out in pursuit, found the country deserted, the enemy having hidden their arms and returned to agricultural pursuits. The British again resumed possession of Kabul and, within a few days, the bazaars were as densely thronged as ever. The Afghans of the Kabul Province had tried to overwhelm the invaders and had signally failed.

On New Year's Day, 1880, Durand writes to Sir Alfred Lyall :

The insurgents seem to have completely dispersed for the present, excepting Muhammad Jan's band of two or three thousand men. Baker's force saw no sign of an enemy in Koh Daman. One of those who were out with him tells me the villages contained no able-bodied men ; nothing but women, children and greybeards, which looks rather as if the fighting population were still out. But others assure me the men were all in, and thoroughly cowed ; and I am inclined to think the bands have broken up. All our native information goes to show this.

Nevertheless it is a dangerous country for a small force to be in. There is an amount of natural military aptitude among these people, and an amount of forts and arms, which make a rising easy to bring about and difficult to subdue. A little carelessness or ill luck might at any time bring about a disaster. Afghan fighting men are not to be despised when they greatly outnumber you. I have always undervalued them until now, and overvalued the power of superior arms and discipline, and overvalued also the European soldier.

You have seen fighting and probably had not the same idea ; but I confess I always thought a hundred British soldiers were worth five times the number of Asiatics. Perhaps when the Asiatics are all on one side, officers included, those odds can be given ; but British officers allowed, there is little to choose between them, and in some ways the native is the better soldier. Anything more cool and gentlemanly than a Sikh under fire is not to be found ; and at all events with the cavalry branch, Indians are far more practically useful. No doubt the 9th Lancers would ride over any cavalry regiment here, on grass, but the Guides or the 5th Punjab Cavalry would do, and are doing, double the work with half the loss. You must have

European troops, of course ; and British infantry for purely fighting purposes beats everything.

The insurgents must have had some fun over the *daks*. An old Parsee, who came up in Yahia Khan's train, tells me they made him read and translate our letters. The first day they had rather a find, a request from the General for reinforcements and ammunition, amongst other things. Cama says, in answer to my question why he did not mistranslate : "Sir, my mind was not in my presence, and they all did look very horribly, and say I must be killed just now, so I was much frightened." Poor devil ; I dare say he was.

Late in January (1880), Durand gives some account of the difficulties of his position as Political Secretary in a letter to Lyall :

Not long after joining my appointment I found that many of the views prevailing here were altogether out of accord with what I thought right, and that I was likely in some ways to find the position a difficult one. Hastings was always in favour of moderate and careful measures, but he had no influence whatever with the General ; and after I had on two or three occasions given my opinion with his, I could see we were both looked upon as unsuited to the times. The General himself was almost always ready to let me have my say and hear me out patiently ; but on almost every point he thought me totally wrong, and more than once when I felt bound to persist I found my doing so was by no means palatable. In fact the views of the soldiers were absolutely predominant, and other counsels had no chance. We were overridden about the treatment of Yakub Khan, about the arrest of the Ministers, and numberless other things, until finally the most important matters came to be practically decided without our knowledge.

The late insurrection produced a change in the General's views on many points. Since then he has, I think, come to the conclusion that I was not always utterly wrong. My position has entirely changed, and for the future, in all probability, I shall be able to write as I please without feeling that I am undermining his views.

It seems only right to point out that some of Durand's criticisms in this and the preceding chapter were hardly just to Roberts. For example, had he not inflicted an exemplary punishment on the villagers of Maidan, who had killed the British Agent and attacked the cavalry charged

with the task of collecting supplies, his force would have starved; whereas, as soon as the destruction of the villages was known, supplies came in freely. Again, what was the alternative to the occupation of the Sherpur Cantonment?

It must be remembered that Durand, at this period, was a man under thirty years of age with no practical experience of Afghans, whereas the British commander had studied them for many years. The opinions Durand held about Roberts at this time underwent considerable change in later life. Experience showed him that, in war, principles that hold good in peace time have sometimes to be modified before stern necessity, and he always spoke to me of Roberts with admiration and affection. On the other hand, Roberts showed his sagacity in listening patiently to Durand, who naturally viewed many questions from rather a different angle, and hardly realized the many factors, such as supply and water, that have to be considered in military operations.

Durand was not destined to take part in the negotiations which placed Abdur Rahman, *the* strong man of his generation in Central Asia, on the throne. His entry on January 30, 1880, runs :

My work here is over. On the 25th I received a letter from Lyall saying the Viceroy had agreed to give me Plowden's[1] place, and I leave on the first. My luck has been great, a hard campaign and the blue riband of the junior service at seven years. The General has been very complimentary and professes great regret at my going. But he sees the place is too good to refuse.

Durand gives an interesting account of his journey down the Khaibar Pass to Peshawar.

I started on the 1st February in a blinding snowstorm. Lunch with Wilmot of the 14th Bengal Lancers in the miserable fort at Butkhak, wet through and bitterly cold. However, a good go of rum put me to rights, and I reached Lataband shortly after dark. Frank Norman put me up there, and I had a pleasant dinner followed by a wretched sleepless night, the rain pouring incessantly on my tent and soaking the ground under me. Rode next day to Jagdallak.

[1] Later, Sir Trevor J. Chichele Plowden.

Snow had come on again at breakfast time, and the march over the Lataband Kotal was trying. At the top of it, in deep snow, I found Gurdial, my Hindu bearer, utterly exhausted and weeping bitterly.

The stupid fellow had let his pony go on ahead of him and failed to catch up the party. He was struggling along on foot with my claymore and sank in the snow as we came in sight. I saw him and was prepared for an ambush from some ferocious tribesman. We, the two sowars and myself, moved slowly forward, pistols and carbines ready, and as we came nearer and nearer the excitement of waiting for the shot became intense. It ended in my riding on to the top of the wretched Gurdial, and the absurdity of the thing, despite his misery, sent me into a roar of unsympathetic laughter, which seemed to hurt him much. We took him on, with the aid of my pony, and reached Seh Baba all right by lunch time. This is a miserable unfortified post on the bank of the river, and in a heavy drizzle of snow and rain looked most dreary.

After a talk with Woodruffe, who commanded, we started again for Jagdallak, and then real sorrows began. The road was across higher ground, and we soon found the snow lying again; while about four o'clock a heavy storm came on with intense cold, and a wind which the baggage animals would not face. We crawled on a few yards at a time between the gusts. Then night came on, and, as I afterwards found, we were still seven or eight miles from Jagdallak. The sowars, however, professed to know the way well, and assured me it was quite close, and as the road had been fairly quiet of late I thought the only harm would be a little extra hard work for the men and beasts. Finally one of the sowars told me camp was only just round the next hill which we could dimly see just in front of us, and leaving the other men with the servants and animals I pushed on. It was, however, full four miles farther, and at last the sowar confessed that he did not know the road.

This was not pleasant, but as the road was marked by a double line of stones cleared off it, which were not quite covered, and as moreover, there were telegraph posts along it a great part of the way, and the feeling under foot was different on the cleared track, we pushed on hopefully, my only fear being that we might have passed the post at Jagdallak. This fear was removed by our hearing distant bugle sounds come through the darkness in our front. About 8.30 we were within four hundred yards of the breastwork, separated only by a deep nullah and stream. Here the friendly telegraph wire disappeared, the wire soaring away into the air in front of us, in what direction we could not clearly make out. Then we began shot after

shot in various directions, losing the road each time and ending in deep ice holes from which we laboriously tracked our footsteps back to the telegraph posts.

Finally we lost touch of these, and then we were fairly abroad Our only chance seemed to be to climb so long as we could find anything to go up, hoping to see lights. We did so—our horses following us in the snow and darkness up places which I should never have dreamed of attempting by daylight. We all slipped and floundered sadly at times, and once I walked straight over the edge of a steep *khud*, and slipped some feet, but pulled up with the aid of my fingers and very gingerly climbed back, my horse luckily wrenching the bridle from my hand as I fell. However, we fortunately tried in the right direction, and after an hour's scrambling and shouting a shout came back in return, and soon afterwards a light was shown. Ascertaining that our answerers were not enemies, we went forward and at last got in at the back of the post pretty thoroughly exhausted.

Thus ended a trying experience. The remaining stages of the journey were comparatively easy, and Durand duly reached Peshawar safe and sound.

There are few experiences in life of greater value than a campaign and, for Durand, participation in the Second Afghan War was of special advantage, in view of his subsequent career at the Indian Foreign Office. His knowledge and appreciation of the military point of view, a quality rare among civilians, who frequently look down on military officers, enabled him to realize both the military and political aspect of questions. Lyall wrote to a friend at this period:

Morty Durand sends me excellent letters, so good indeed that the Ghilzais in the Khurd Kabul are in the habit of abducting them; I have lost more than one. I saw one of them printed in the Viceroy's private collection of papers, but I don't tell Durand, as it might affect the freedom of his style.

The future of Afghanistan was a very difficult problem. Roberts recommended its division into provinces, ruled by governors, subservient to ourselves. Lyall, too, wrote, "We shall now, beyond doubt, disintegrate the country; there is no other course left." Durand, who was in favour of annexation, condemned disintegration, as playing

Russia's game by making it easier for her to annex provinces situated to the north of the Hindu Kush. British policy was fortunate, for the third and best alternative of a strong ruler became possible in the person of Abdur Rahman Khan, who appeared on the scene from Russian Turkistan. Negotiations were opened up by Mr. (later Sir Lepel) Griffin,[1] and although the Afghan Sirdar's behaviour was not entirely satisfactory, full allowances were made for his very difficult position.

Abdur Rahman Khan was finally proclaimed Amir by the British and, after his installation in the Bala Hissar, could say :

"I look from a fort half-ruined, on Kabul spreading below,
On the near hills crowned with cannon, and the far hills piled with snow ;
Fair are the vales well watered, and the vines on the upland swell,
You might think you were reigning in Heaven—I know I am ruling Hell.

"For there's hardly a room in my palace but a kinsman there was killed,
And never a street in the city but with false fierce curs is filled ;
With a mob of priests, and fanatics, and all my mutinous host ;
Like wolves they are watching my steps, and the Prince who slips is lost." [2]

But the British were not fated to evacuate this rugged land without suffering a disaster. Ayub Khan had been collecting troops at Herat, and rumours of his intention to advance on Kandahar had been received by the British authorities, who were not disposed to attach much importance to them. The departure of Sir Donald Stewart's division for Kabul in the spring of 1880 had much weakened the Kandahar garrison, and was probably the determining factor in Ayub's decision.

In July he started from Herat, and a brigade under

[1] The story is told in detail in Lady Betty Balfour's "Lord Lytton's Indian Administration," Chap. VIII.

[2] From Sir A. Lyall's *The Amir's Soliloquy*.

Brigadier-General Burrows was dispatched to the Helmand at Girishk, to support the Afghan troops of Sirdar Shir Ali, who ruled Kandahar in the British interest. Upon the approach of Ayub's army, these troops deserted to him, and the British fell back to a position half-way to Kandahar.

The British feared that Ayub might evade Burrows and march on Ghazni, which was very weakly held, and orders were issued to General Primrose that Ayub should be attacked, if he considered that he was strong enough to do so. Burrows heard that 2,000 Afghan cavalry and a large body of ghazis had reached Maiwand, distant eleven miles, and that Ayub was following with the main body. He thereupon decided to strike a blow at this advance guard. After he had started, he received information that the entire force of Ayub was concentrated at Maiwand, but, unwilling to retire before an Asiatic foe, he adhered to his original plan. The British force attacked, but was met by Afghans many times their numbers, provided with a superior artillery and stiffened by the ghazis. The ammunition of the British artillery gave out, and the troops, who were apparently tired by the march and the heat, were routed and retired to Kandahar, losing nearly one-half of their number. Ayub, after this victory, advanced on Kandahar, which he invested.

This disaster was speedily avenged by Roberts, who relieved Kandahar by a march of three hundred and thirteen miles in twenty-two days, and completely defeated Ayub Khan. This famous feat of arms incidentally helped considerably to consolidate the position of Abdur Rahman Khan.

The British troops were finally withdrawn from Afghanistan, after proving the firm intention of the British Government not to permit its ruler to ally himself with Russia. Apart from this, our intercourse with the Afghans, the justice with which they were treated, and the liberal payments made for supplies and transport, all produced their effect and helped to dispel the dense cloud of ignorance and prejudice that had characterized the baneful old "close-frontier policy," which was now swept away.



Kabul 1879

During the action in the Charden valley, on the 12th (13th) of Dec.r 1879, two Squadrons of the 9th Lancers were ordered to charge a large force of Afghans in the hope of saving our guns. The charge failed, and some of our dead were afterwards found dreadfully mutilated by Afghan knives. They were brought back and buried in the cemetery at the corner of our Cantonment, close to the foot of the Bemáru hill.

I saw it all - and wrote this not long after - A.M.D. 24.1.95

Kabul. 1879

Aye, we have found him, the fair young face
Turned to the pitiless Afghan skies,
The frost bound earth for a resting place,
Dead - with the horror of death in his eyes.

Lying alone there, out on the plain
Where the desperate charge of our horsemen broke;
Foremost fighting, and foremost slain,
Gashed by many a murderous stroke.

Bear him away to the trench bound camp
To the sights and the sounds that his heart held dear,
Let the trumpets ring and the squadrons tramp
Fall once more on the soldiers' ear.

Where the north wind sweeps by the foot of the hill,
And the graves lie thick in the desolate snow,
Follow him lovingly - all who will,
Think of him, grieve for him, once and go.

Go and forget him. You will forget
Ere the first snow melts there, over his head,
And the living must live for the living - and yet,
It makes one pity the dead.

Anon

CHAPTER IX

UNDER-SECRETARY IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE

And then! The scent and whisper of the firs;
The crimson blossoms on a deep blue sky;
And the cold, fragrant mountain air that stirs
Among the brown rock grasses silently;
And far to north the splendour of the snows;
And far to south the dim, delirious haze;
Beneath that steamy canopy one knows
Hot men pass hideous days.—DURAND.

UPON reaching Calcutta, Durand found that Lyall was proceeding to Kabul to discuss matters with Roberts. He was consequently brought into close personal relations with Lord Lytton, whose character was distasteful to him; and he certainly found no reason for modifying his opinion on a closer view. Lord Lytton invited him to stay with him, and habitually kept him playing whist until midnight. They then began work and for several hours discussed replies to the various telegrams that had arrived during the day, after which His Excellency was free to retire to bed, whereas Durand had to work until breakfast-time putting everything into due form, and frequently having to take a bath instead of a night's rest. Needless to say, he resented this inconsiderate behaviour.

Upon the fall of the Conservative Government in the spring of 1880, Lord Lytton, whose policy was condemned by the Liberals, was recalled and handed over charge to his successor. It was an unhappy departure from the best traditions of British policy that matters of vital importance to our Empire should be treated as mere party questions. Although Afghanistan was in dire confusion at the moment, Lytton's policy was finally justified by results, as this biography shows.

Under Lord Ripon, the new Viceroy, Durand's work was incessant, and boxes of papers were taken home every night after long hours spent in office. One Sunday we read :

A lazy day. I sent away all my work and spent the morning finishing a copy of verses and the afternoon reading English papers. It was a heroic effort, and I have arrived at such a pitch that I felt positively sinful in taking the holiday. It will mean a terrible accumulation of boxes.

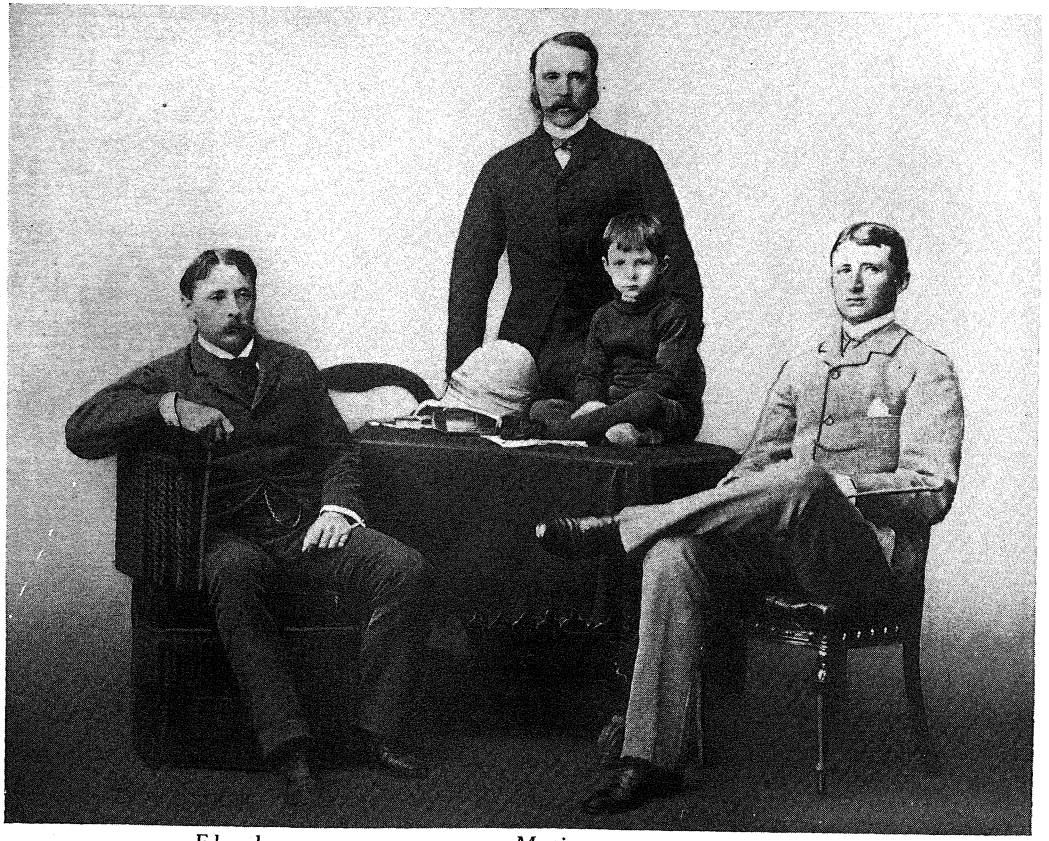
However, there were occasionally breaks to the monotony :

This morning before breakfast I was offered a bribe in plain words by a scoundrel from Udaipur who has a case on against the Raja, or rather who represents a *thakur* with a case. After some little talk he said, finding I was dead against any interference, " It can be arranged by your help ; I have brought two thousand rupees for your Honour." I suppose he saw something in my eyes, for the words were hardly out of his mouth before his jaw dropped and he made a plunge for the door. He did not get away, however, and I fancy it will be some time before he and his companion forget the thrashing they received.

It is interesting to see how Durand's jealousy of his son had completely changed. He writes with delight of his pluck in riding his wife's Arab pony and also of ordering his " partickler " uniform for a fancy dress ball :

Left office at 5 to see Hal dressed for the fancy ball. We marched in together exactly alike—sword and C.S.I. and all—and the effect was first rate. All the other children looked more or less uncomfortable in silks and satins, and the plain political uniform, with white waistcoat, and little stick-up collar, were unique. Hal made his bow gravely, with his hat under his arm, and altogether " came off." I could hardly get him away.

For his daughter, too, Durand's affection was intense. He joined in her games and in those of his youthful relations, one of whom wrote to me:



Edward Mortimer Algernon

THE THREE DURAND BROTHERS, 1881.
(With Hal sitting on table.)

I should like to say what a prime favourite Uncle Morty was with us children. No one who knew his rather stiff official bearing could have believed it possible that our splendid playmate was the same man. Hide and seek, knuckle-bones, cricket, bicycling, building wigwams, violent battles, nothing tired him. We loved him most dearly.

Upon his return from a journey with the Viceroy he writes :

Our landing at Prinsep's Ghat was a pretty sight, and I was pleased to get my household back again. Jo came to me through all the crowd somehow, and I found her little purple Tam o' Shanter pressed against my legs and her arms round them. Ella looking very sweet and pretty with a bright colour and bright eyes. It was then and afterwards a happy homecoming.

Durand wrote charming letters to Josephine, illustrating them with pen-and-ink sketches, which recall to my mind Thackeray's letters to his daughter Annie. Of these I give some examples in the following pages.

There was, however, little change in Durand's shyness, and his wife was told by Sir Donald Stewart, the Commander-in-Chief, that

I was the most difficult man to get on with that he had ever come across, that he knew all my people so well, but could never get me to talk. It is very odd that people will think that—but I suppose they have reason.

This habit of silence, unless particularly interested, naturally affected his popularity.

Durand was happy at Simla. He enjoyed the life with his wife and children, to whom he was devoted ; his important and interesting work was appreciated by his superiors ; and he realized that he possessed qualifications for the higher posts that he would hold in due course. His health was not particularly good, as, although he found time occasionally for riding, walking and lawn tennis, the heavy office work, coupled with attacks of liver, partly due to a sedentary life, brought on insomnia,

Srinagar. Kashmir
Nov. 7. 91

My blessing! I could not write yesterday. The little Maharaja came and took up all my evening, sitting holding my hand in both of his and rolling his eyes at me, and saying I was a splendid fellow.



And I put my nose in the air and was very haughty, as I always am.

There was a great game of polo on Saturday and a "Lama Dance." It was rather like the Lancers race in Little Alice. Everyone began when he pleased and left off when he pleased and hit the ball either way. And when anyone hit, the Lama band burst out - drums and long trumpets. Afterwards they

pumped about like a lot of unmeaning idiots, and called it dancing.
I hear you won the Dolls' house in the raffle. I think raffling is very wicked, and I am going to get a divorce from your mother for teaching you to gamble.
I have told her to go and get photographed at once - as a parting present to me. I know she will be troublesome about it, so I look to you to worry her incessantly until she goes. You will be quite horrid, won't you, if she puts it off? You can be quite horrid I know - from bitter experience -
Hal's pictures of himself in tails are rather good. Soon I suppose you will be turning your hair up and wearing long dresses. That sort of thing



Good bye. my blessing your loving Father

Calcutta

March 29.93

My blessing

Many thanks for your letter and the primrose and violet.
It is sad about the poor little pup.
The mosquitoes are very bad. come and prowl all round my net. screaming at me



and then at last they tear a hole in the curtains and then it's so all night:



till I go nearly mad. and in the morning I find them sitting on my net about this size



and rather sleepy from having ziyáda gegorgen.
And then I have my revenge and they die the death.

I saw such a funny Baboo today trying to kick a football. He threw it up in the air and did so:



but he never touched it. He seemed to enjoy himself very much all the same. Rum things Baboos.

Now I must go to bed. In about a week I hope to shoot a tiger. Hope it may not be this way:



Goodbye. Everyone loving Father.

but not to any serious extent. How much he enjoyed the beauty of Simla in its various phases the lines given at the outset of this chapter show.

The following description also merits quotation:

Heavy rain all day, but cleared in the evening, and we watched from the high ground by the church the finest sunset I have ever seen. A flood of purple light came over the hills, and the higher clouds were blazing with every conceivable colour, while over the plains lay a dense white sea without a break. As we watched, this came rolling up round the lower hills, engulphing one peak after another. To-night, where the dim western end of the snow peaks juts out towards the plains, there was a stretch of pale green and blue and yellow melting into the centre sunset and flecked with points of fire. To left a dark mass of cloud, through a single rent in which the red glare behind showed like the reflection of some great conflagration.

The Afghan question continued to absorb the attention of the Foreign Office. The Liberal Government had resolved in November, 1880, that British troops should be withdrawn from Southern Afghanistan. It is interesting to note how pessimistic Durand was on this subject. On January 26, 1881, he writes:

The Liberals have the right policy, to keep Afghanistan united, failing annexation, but they have been saddled by the Lytton régime with the wrong man. If we could throw him over, we should have an united Afghanistan to-morrow. Now we can do nothing.

On April 21, 1881, Kandahar was handed over to the representatives of the Amir:

So ends that much vexed question. Convinced as I am that Afghanistan must some day be ours, and that if I live the normal time I shall see the day, I am certain we are doing right now. The Amir is having an honest try for his kingdom. If he can go in at Ayub and bowl him over he might keep it. But the odds are against him.

The entire success of the policy, indeed, hinged on whether Abdur Rahman could defeat Ayub Khan and hold Kandahar. If he failed to do so, he would certainly

lose Kabul and again become a refugee, whereas, if he won, he gained Herat as well as Kandahar. In July Ayub marched out from Herat and decisively defeated the Kabul troops near Kandahar, many of whom joined the victor.

Kandahar is of course gone. I don't think Ayub is fool enough to break his head against us—but if he comes on we shall have all we can do to hold our own. However, his game is evidently to take Kabul now, and leave us alone. The Amir's defeat is exasperating beyond words. Ayub should have been rolled over and destroyed—if the accounts are correct.

In August we read,

Scribbled over this morning before breakfast an encouraging letter to the Amir. Lyall says it is too strong. Sir Donald Stewart is backing St. John,[1] and, in the rest of the Council, there is a general inclination to let things drift and do nothing. None of them ever read papers or try to give an opinion worth a damn. Ayub has sent a letter, and asks to be friends. St. John wants to jump at it, but he has orders simply to acknowledge it, and say he has forwarded it for instructions.

A few days later,

Went over to Lyall's for a private interview with the Amir's envoy, Mir Ahmad, whose one idea is for us to detain Ayub as much as possible and give the Amir time. He was very urgent about this. We could do it if His Excellency would not be so cautious. A simple order to collect supplies for three months at Quetta would nail Ayub to Kandahar. His soldiers are quarrelling among themselves, and disarmament is going on among them. If the Amir has no disaster for a month he should win yet. It would be a great triumph for Lord Ripon, and I should be delighted.

The Amir finally advanced and defeated Ayub, mainly owing to two Kabuli regiments, that had joined Ayub and were held in reserve, opening fire on the ghazis in the front line. Kandahar was occupied and, needless to say, the bazaars were plundered. Abdur Rahman, who was evidently confident of success, had previously dispatched a force from Afghan Turkistan which captured

[1] Afterwards Sir Oliver St. John.

Herat, so that Ayub and his followers were obliged to take refuge in Persia, where they gave a good deal of trouble. They were finally given pensions by the Indian Government, and I recollect seeing them at Rawal Pindi nearly forty years ago and being struck by the hawk-like features of Ayub Khan.

The result of this campaign was the firm establishment of Abdur Rahman, who ruled his treacherous subjects with an iron hand.

"High stands thy Kabul citadel, where many have room and rest;
The Amirs give welcome entry, but they speed not the parting guest."

* * * * *

"Let the Ghilzai bide on his mountain, and depart, as thy message has said,
When but one sure friend the Amir shall send—when the tombs give up their dead."

In the autumn Durand accompanied Lord Ripon on tour in Rajputana. He was bored by the receptions and banquets, and indulges in one of his penetrating characterizations:

A big wearisome dinner in the evening at the palace, much food and indifferent speechifying. Lord Ripon has a fine flow of words, but the intonation is too pompous and the effect wavers between the sublime and the ridiculous.

On the way to Calcutta he visited Bhagalpur, where his father-in-law, old Judge Sandys, lived on after the death of his wife. He was suffering from senile decay and spent much of his time digging out a cave, while he lived mainly in a tree.

The old house is heartbreaking now, half-dismantled and full of ghosts to me. There is something horrible about the permanence of everything material when our lives change so fast. All round this house is the same; wherever I look I know every tree and every foot of ground, and expect to see the old faces; and yet all is so utterly different. Seven years has done it all. I suppose I shall hardly

ever see this place again, and I feel as if I could go round and kiss every inch of its wood and stone. I shall never love any house as I have loved this.

The last measure that Lord Ripon wished to pass was the Ilbert Bill,[1] by the terms of which Indian-born Civil Servants who occupied certain positions were given jurisdiction in charges against Europeans. This measure was approved of by the local Governments, with one exception, and the India Office also approved. Lord Ripon was badly treated, for the weighty opinion of the eminent jurist Sir Henry Maine, who was on the Council of the Secretary of State and who advised that, in such circumstances, Europeans should have the right of trial by jury, never reached him. The story goes that Lord Hartington, the most casual of Ministers, took the paper off to read at his leisure—and it remained in the pocket of his coat.

Durand writes :

From the 20th February to the 15th March I was acting again as Private Secretary, Primrose[2] being down with typhoid. It was a rough time, on account of the Jurisdiction Bill, which has aroused an outburst of feeling among the European community unequalled since the Mutiny. The great meeting at the Town Hall on the 28th February was attended by fully three thousand people ; and from end to end of India addresses have been pouring in.

Lord Ripon took it very pluckily and well, but he was evidently taken aback at the resentment and opposition aroused, and feels he has made a mistake, as indeed all his Council feel. Not one of them except Ilbert is really in favour of the measure, which is a useless and mischievous piece of claptrap on behalf of the Bengali *babu.*

The debate about the measure on the 9th March was a memorable one. The Council had resolved, after a long discussion in Lord Ripon's private room, not to drop the Bill, and the Secretary of State agreed. The motion, therefore, was the ordinary one—for

[1] Its framer, Sir Courtenay Ilbert, was afterwards Clerk to the House of Commons.

[2] Afterwards Sir Henry W. Primrose, Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue.

the publication of the Bill in various languages—it being understood that nothing further would be done until the next legislative session in November. The debate, if it can be called a debate, lasted from eleven till eight, one member after another reading out long speeches. I then rushed off to dine with the Lieutenant-Governor and, on my return, sat up till five o'clock getting the proofs of H.E.'s speech corrected for press. Poor old gentleman, he had had a hard day, but he stuck to it gamely, correcting sheet after sheet as they came in, and sitting motionless during the intervals with his hands folded before him. There is no more laborious man in India.

The fact is [he adds later], Lord Ripon is going too fast all round. There is truth in the remarks of *The Times* about his "breathless benevolence." He knows nothing of India and he is filled with desire to raise the natives in any way he can. His scheme of local self-government is full of dangerous crudities, and the decision which he has had to announce closing Rurki[1] to any but natives of "pure Asiatic descent" has alienated the Eurasians. It is in fact a breach of faith, and most unjust. So it is with everything. The line is to go with the native in everything and despise European opinion.

Primrose is all on the same lines. His particular friends among the natives are the worst set. Amongst others, I found, on taking over charge, that he was in constant communication, written and personal, with the editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, a low seditious scoundrel, who writes treason and the foulest Billingsgate issue after issue. This man had seen Lord Ripon, who was evidently rather ashamed of it, for when he applied for an interview H.E. hesitated. I said, "I would not see him, sir. He is a low blackguard of no position, and his paper is a tissue of insults to Englishmen in general, and of lies." Lord Ripon then said, "No, I think I had better not see him. Please tell him so"—which I did with much pleasure.

This is the result of "breathless benevolence." You find yourself hand in hand with the blatant *babu* and *hoc genus omne*, while the real native looks calmly on from the distance wondering, like Shah Shuja when we abandoned the Commissariat Fort at Kabul, "whether the English are mad," and caring nothing for the supposed privileges we are giving.

I recollect Durand discussing this matter at length with me and telling me that, before acting as Private

[1] The Thomason Engineering College.

Secretary, he informed the Viceroy that he was opposed to the Ilbert Bill, but was asked to oblige him by undertaking the work temporarily. Sir Alfred Lyall, on the other hand, considered the root principle of the Bill to be sound, but disliked "setting fire to an important wing of the house to roast a healthy but small pig."

In the spring, Durand took a few months' leave home, stopping in Egypt and visiting the site of the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. There he waxed contemptuous over the Egyptian entrenchments, his summing-up being :

We should hardly have noticed their existence in Afghanistan.

Upon returning to India in the autumn :

The Viceroy sent for me in the afternoon and was most complimentary, expressing his great pleasure at having me back, and his confidence in me. He added, "I only wish you were a year or two older in the service, then I should have no difficulty in filling the permanent appointment.," which means that I must not expect it. He inquired curiously about the feeling in Calcutta, and I told him it was as strong as it could be ; that, for instance, the small body of mounted volunteers who met him marched down amid the hisses and jeers of their companions. It is in fact astonishingly violent. Nothing is too bad for the Europeans to say about Lord Ripon and Ilbert. He is very depressed about it all, poor old man, and fears a row. He would withdraw if he could, but he says he cannot, and it does seem difficult now. The proper time was when the official opinions came in.

On December 28, 1883, the crisis was ended.

Since my last entry the Ilbert Bill has gone through a decisive phase by the offer of a compromise on the ground of Europeans being allowed a jury. In its present shape the measure seems to involve some practical difficulty of working, but it has been accepted by the leaders of the opposition, and should stop the row. The natives are cross—naturally—for the "Concordat" is practically a surrender on the part of the Government. And there is a chance of a further mess because, so far as I can see, the terms are not precisely understood. But on the whole it seems likely to settle the business.

Lord Ripon wrote to Durand, the entry in the diary running :

"My dear Durand,

"As you have now ceased to officiate as Foreign Secretary, I must write a few lines to tell you how entirely satisfied I am with the manner in which you have discharged the duties of that important post, and to thank you very much for the assistance which you have given me. It has been a great pleasure to me to work with you ; and I have felt more and more every day how safely I might rely upon the justness of your judgment, the thoroughness of your work, and the soundness of the principles by which you are guided in dealing with questions of our foreign policy.

"Yours sincerely, Ripon."

This is as pleasant as possible. I only wish I could honestly feel more respect for his opinion in the matter. But I do not think I can ever regain confidence in his sagacity or his principles of policy. He is timid beyond words in foreign affairs, and most harmful in his dealings with our own subjects. It seems hard to feel so, for he is, I believe, really most well disposed towards me, but I cannot help feeling that he has done immeasurable mischief.

The Viceroy's return to Calcutta is described :

Lord Ripon certainly had a most triumphant entry. The station was one sea of roaring heads. Every roadside station had been crowded with natives in their best costumes, but this was a wonderful sight, and all the way to Government House the crowd was densely packed, streets and windows and roofs one mass of natives shouting and cheering and waving flags and showering flowers. There must have been many scores of thousands out, and the enthusiasm was unmistakable. It was a triumph dearly bought, and not a wholesome triumph in many ways, but a triumph it certainly was.

A few weeks later, Lord Ripon handed over his high office to Lord Dufferin and left India, justly regretted by the Indian population and somewhat unjustly disliked by the Europeans, since, in practice, the Ilbert Bill did not impair the safeguards for Europeans, whereas the outcry with whicht hey received it quickened Indian political consciousness, and was one of the causes of the foundation of the Indian National Congress.

CHAPTER X

THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION

Upon the Russian frontier, where
The watchers of two armies stand
Near one another, many a man,
Seeking a prey unto his hand,

Hath snatch'd a little fair-hair'd slave;
They snatch also, towards Merve,
The Shia dogs, who pasture sheep,
And up from thence to Orgunjè.—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

THE advance of Russia towards the Indian Empire continued steadily while the British were fighting for paramountcy in Afghanistan. After the subjugation of Khiva in 1873, the only independent area left in Central Asia was the vast but sparsely inhabited country of the Turkomans, which stretched from Khiva on the north to the borders of Afghanistan on the south, and from Bokharan territory on the east to the Caspian Sea on the west. Persia had exercised suzerainty over the Turkomans to some extent until, in 1861, a Persian force was defeated with crushing losses by the Tekke Turkomans of Merv, after which no serious operations were undertaken to restore the authority of the Shah, although raids were occasionally made from the fort of Sarakhs, which constituted the Persian frontier stronghold.

Russia began her advance into Turkoman territory by dispatching columns from Chikishlyar, a port on the Caspian Sea, up the river Atrak. In 1879 a force reached Geok Tepe and assaulted the fortified camp of the Tekke Turkomans of the Akhal Oasis, but was ultimately repulsed with heavy losses in men, material and prestige, the disaster being comparable to that suffered by the British in the First Afghan War.

Two years later, Skobeleff fully restored Russian prestige. With a column specially strong in artillery he attacked the same position and, after breaching the walls and exploding a mine, carried the fort by assault and killed the Tekkes by thousands, both in the enclosure and in the subsequent pursuit. This decisive victory resounded like a thunder-clap in Central Asia, and the Tekkes of Merv were, in consequence, finally induced to tender their submission, and were annexed in 1884, together with the wide area surrounding the oasis.

By this gigantic stride of hundreds of miles, the contact of the Russian and Afghan frontiers, which had been a subject of anxious foreboding by the rulers of India for more than two generations, became a reality that had to be faced. Moreover, the general position of Russia was immensely strengthened by the construction of the Central Asian Railway that was commenced by Skobeleff and finally united Bokhara, Samarkand, and Tashkent with the Russian Empire, alike by land and by way of the Caspian Sea, thus enabling her to bring large forces to the Afghan frontier for an invasion of India, if such were her policy.

Persia was equally affected by the fate of the Turkomans, and the question of her northern frontier in its eastern section had to be settled. The Russians are believed to have made a secret agreement with Shah Nasir-u-Din, who probably realized that he had no power to oppose them and had better take money for accepting the inevitable. However this may be, by the arrangement that was come to, the entire *atek* or fertile skirt of the mountains of north-east Khorasan was annexed by Russia, a settlement that was undoubtedly unfavourable to Persia and indirectly unfavourable to Afghanistan as bringing Russia closer to Herat, and higher up the valley of the Hari Rud. Moreover, the Russians settled some of their new subjects on lands at Sarakhs and at Pul-i-Khatun, to which the Persians had undoubted claims.

Durand wrote in January, 1884:

The only statesmanlike course is to endeavour to come to a really frank and friendly understanding with the Power which we have hitherto tried in vain in a half-hearted way to thwart and impede. I would, if possible, embody that understanding in a formal treaty, precisely defining the limits of Afghanistan . . . and recognizing the extension of Russian influence up to those limits.

In his diary of July 23, 1884, we read:

The Russian question has assumed an altogether new phase. We sent home a telegram and then dispatches recommending the delimitation of the Afghan frontier, and the idea was well received. But in the meantime the Russians occupied Merv, then pushed up the valley of the Murghab, and finally seized Sarakhs in defiance of the Persian protest. I have succeeded in convincing the Viceroy of the great value of old Sarakhs and in inducing him to advise H.M.'s Government to back the Persian protest. But the Russians will doubtless stick to it, and the whole valley of the Hari Rud is thus uncovered to encroachment.

At this period the British Government and M. de Giers, the Russian Foreign Minister, were alike anxious to come to a settlement in Central Asia, but this sentiment was not shared by the Russian War Office, which was opposed to any agreement that would put an end to the advance of Russia towards India. Against the ultimate success of this obstruction was the strong support given to de Giers by the Tsar.

In the Agreement of 1873 with Russia, which is given in Chapter VII, a rough line had been laid down, according to which, west of Khoja Saleh, the Amir's dominions included the internal districts of Akcha, Sari Pul, Maimana, Shibarghan and Andkhui, the latter of which would be the extreme Afghan frontier possession to the north-west, the desert beyond belonging to the independent tribes of the Turkomans. In view of the lack of exact geographical knowledge that existed at that time, this definition served as a basis to the two Governments.

The Amir, whose frontier was to be delimitated, and

who was seriously menaced by the occupation of the Merv area, knew a good deal about his provinces to the north of the Hindu Kush, and was keen on a forward policy in this area. But he was less keen about the boundaries in the vicinity of Herat, for an excellent reason in the eyes of an Oriental, namely that he knew nothing about them. When requested by the Viceroy to depute an official with expert knowledge of the subject to consult with the Government of India, he replied that he had no official with such qualifications, but that, in each district, men with the necessary local knowledge would be in readiness.

After an exchange of views between the two great Powers, it was agreed that the northern boundary of Afghanistan should be delimitated by a Commission on the spot. Major-General Sir Peter Lumsden, who had served in Afghanistan many years previously, was appointed British Commissioner, and General Zelenoi, who had considerable experience of boundary commissions, was appointed the representative of Russia.

The Russian Government, who had sent their expert, M. Lessar, to London, urged the advisability of arranging zones of investigation beforehand, and proposed that the northern limit should start from a point on the Hari Rud opposite Daulatabad (a village situated some miles to the south of Sarakhs), and run in a straight line to the Murghab and thence to Khoja Saleh. This northern line was finally accepted by the British, but Lord Granville declined to accept the proposed southern limit, and thereby encouraged the Russians to push forward as far as possible. On the other hand, accurate information was entirely lacking, and Lord Granville was probably wise not to commit the Foreign Office prematurely.

It was decided that part of the British Commission should be appointed by India, to ensure that the views of the Government of India should receive full weight. The survey party and escort were necessarily supplied by India.

Durand was given the choice between acting as Foreign Secretary, with the probability of being confirmed in the appointment, or of taking charge of the Indian section of the Commission. He writes: "I was much tempted, but, after two days' consideration, decided on remaining here." He then arranged for Colonel Ridgeway, who had deeply studied the Central Asian problem, to be appointed to this post. With him were sent his brother Captain Edward Durand, Captain C. E. Yate[1] and Mr. R. H. Merk as Political Officers, while Captain De Lassoe (who knew French but not Russian) acted as official interpreter; Surgeon C. W. Owen was in medical charge of the Mission. The survey party under Major (now Sir Thomas) Holdich, included Captains the Hon. M. G. Talbot and St. G. Gore, while Captains W. Peacocke and P. J. Maitland served as Intelligence Officers.

The question of the strength of the escort was settled with the greatest difficulty. The military authorities, realizing the turbulence of the Afghans, were inclined to insist on a brigade, whereas Lord Ripon favoured an escort too small for defence. Durand rightly urged that there should be a force strong enough to repel any fanatical outbreak in a village or an attack by bandits, but not stronger than that; and finally his view prevailed and the strength of the escort was fixed at slightly over two hundred cavalry and two hundred infantry.

The Amir raised many difficulties at first and refused to be responsible for the safety of the Mission in his territory. However, he was gradually induced to take a more reasonable view of the matter, and it was finally arranged that the Mission should avoid Kandahar, and march from Quetta via Nushki to the Helmand and thence northwards parallel to the Persian frontier to Kuhsan, where it would join Sir Peter Lumsden.

Ridgeway's first task was an arduous one. The

[1] I would take this opportunity of thanking Sir West Ridgeway and Sir Charles Yate, who have both read this chapter and have made valuable suggestions.

country to be traversed consisted almost entirely of semi-desert stretches, with one waterless section of sixty miles. Moreover it had never been explored, and, as the laying out of supplies and water depended partly on the officials of the Amir, the whole enterprise of moving 1,600 men, 1,600 camels and some 300 horses across these wastes required considerable powers of organization, joined to good luck, to carry it through successfully. It also required constant and loyal support from India, and this Durand gave whole-heartedly and unreservedly. Finally much credit was due to Mr. (now Sir Hugh) Barnes, who opened up the route to the Helmand, marked out the stages, cleaned out or dug anew the wells and laid out forage and rations. All went well and Durand wrote :

> The march from Nushki has been admirably successful ; not a man or a beast or a load lost, and the 226 miles of desert done at a steady rate of 15 miles a day. Ridgeway deserves much credit. On arrival at Helmand there was a row between the camel men and the escort, but Ned and Merk stopped it before it went too far.

Lumsden and his staff, which included Mr. Condie Stephen of the Foreign Office and Captain A. F. Barrow, had travelled out to the Afghan frontier via Tehran and Meshed, and met the Indian section of the Commission at Kuhsan in November. It had been arranged by their respective Foreign Offices that the British and Russian Commissions should start operations that month, but the Russians postponed the meeting until the spring on the ground of the ill-health of their Chief Commissioner.

From the British point of view this delay gave time for survey and intelligence operations to be undertaken, without which the delimitation of the boundary could not have been undertaken with satisfactory results. The Russians, who were present in force, took advantage of the opportunity to press forward and seize debatable territory. Even before Lumsden had taken charge of the Indian section of the Mission at Kuhsan, he had

received information that was scarcely reassuring. In mid-November, General Komaroff, Governor of the Akhal Oasis and Colonel Alikhanoff,[1] Governor of Merv, were reported to be marching up the Murghab River towards the Panjdeh Oasis, where Ghaus-u-Din, an Afghan general, had established himself with a force of 100 cavalry, 400 infantry and two guns.

When about a stage distant from Panjdeh, Komaroff with the main body of the troops returned to Merv, but Alikhanoff pushed on, sending a messenger ahead with a request for an interview. Ghaus-u-Din, justly suspicious of Russian intentions, replied that Alikhanoff had no right to pay him a visit without having obtained his assent while still at Yolatan, and refused to receive him. As the "stormy petrel" of the frontier ignored this message, Ghaus-u-Din warned him that his advance would be resisted. He thereupon halted, and, after writing a threatening and insulting letter to Ghaus-u-Din, he retired temporarily from the scene. But for the strong stand taken by the Afghan General, Alikhanoff would probably have occupied Panjdeh on this occasion.

Lumsden visited Panjdeh and reported that Afghan control over the valley was complete and that taxes were levied on the water supply and on the flocks. This report, although accurate so far as the actual position was concerned, gave an entirely wrong impression, since the Afghans had only occupied Panjdeh with the object of staking out a claim to it before the arrival of the Commission. Actually the Sarik Turkomans were independent of Afghanistan, and there was a strong justification for the Russian claim that this section of Sarik Turkomans should, like the remainder of the tribe, be included in the Russian Empire. Had the question been examined by the Commission, there is no doubt that this would have been their decision, as, on ethnological grounds alone,

[1] Alikhanoff, or "the son of Ali Khan," was a Daghestani Moslem. When I met him at Tiflis, a few years after the Boundary Commission, he struck me as resembling a Scotsman in appearance, with a fiery red beard.

it was clear that only trouble could follow the adoption of any other course.

Lumsden also reported that there was a route to Herat by an easy pass over the Band-i-Baba, and thereby exploded the belief that the classical Parapamisus was a high rugged range and a formidable barrier. He then marched up the Murghab Valley to Bala Murghab. There he fixed his head-quarters for the winter and dispatched survey and intelligence parties to collect the information necessary for the delimitation of the frontier.

Towards the end of February, 1885, the Russians renewed their aggressive action against the Panjdeh Oasis. Alikhanoff, with a considerable force, drove in the Afghan posts situated to the north of the oasis, and established a post of Yolatan Sarik Turkomans at Kizil Tapa, a mound situated about one mile to the north-west of Pul-i-Khishti (or "Brick Bridge"), that spanned the Kushk River, and was soon destined to be famous.

Ridgeway, who was at that time in Panjdeh, protested against this advance, but received a reply from Alikhanoff that his orders were "to occupy the country as far as Pul-i-Khishti; once established there he would neither advance nor fight." Alikhanoff again withdrew, leaving this post behind, his obvious intention being to provoke an incident with the Afghan picket covering the bridge. He also excited the Sariks of Panjdeh against the Afghans by means of letters written to the leading headmen and in other ways, and thus prepared the ground for a decisive blow when Russia was ready.

The Afghans, realizing the seriousness of the position, had gradually increased their small force until it reached the considerable numerical strength of 1,200 infantry, 800 cavalry, and two guns. Actually it possessed little fighting value owing to its miserable armament and equipment. It was camped on the right bank of the Kushk, which was normally only a brook a few inches deep but became unfordable after heavy rains in the hills.

The position of the Afghans was insecure, for the

Sarik Turkomans in their rear, excited by Alikhanoff's emissaries, were hostile to them. Consequently, Ridgeway devoted much time and patience to gaining influence over these wild Turkomans, and met with considerable success, the skill of Dr. Owen being much appreciated by all classes. With the Afghans he also established good relations, and, realizing that the Russians were determined to occupy the country up to Pul-i-Khishti, he advised them to withdraw their post across the river, and by flooding the ground in front of their camp make it inaccessible to both sides. Unfortunately they turned a deaf ear to this sound advice.

Early in March, Ridgeway returned to Bala Murghab, some fifty miles distant, to report to Lumsden ; and Yate took up the delicate task of controlling the Sariks and advising the Afghans.

The stage had been set by Alikhanoff, and the curtain was now raised on the Panjdeh incident, which nearly precipitated war between Great Britain and Russia. Komaroff marched up the Murghab in command of a strong force of all arms and camped at Kizil Tapa. The Afghans thereupon strengthened their position on the left bank of the Kushk, that had been previously held only by a picket, and gradually transferred the bulk of their force to a low plateau that commanded the bridge and their camp.

This change of position was unfortunate from the political point of view ; it was also tactically unsound to hold a line with a river, liable to be unfordable, in the immediate rear. At the same time, in view of the distance of about 1,400 yards from the strengthened position to the Afghan camp, the Afghans were acting within their rights in the matter.

On March 24, the day before the Russians appeared in force, Yate received a copy of Lord Granville's telegram, that the two Governments had agreed that there should be no forward movement on either side from the positions then occupied. This he showed to the Afghan

commander, whose orders from the Amir were to fight if the Russians attacked him. Such, too, was General Lumsden's view of the action to be taken. On March 26, Yate arranged a meeting with Colonel Zakrchevski, Komaroff's chief staff officer. He found that, although the Russians were friendly to him personally and stated that they had no idea of attacking the Afghans, they evidently intended to force them to retire to the right bank of the Kushk. Yate, on his side, gave them a copy of Lord Granville's telegram and expressed the hope that nothing would be done to cause a breach of the peace.

Ridgeway, as already mentioned, had expected the Russians to advance to Pul-i-Khishti, since Lumsden had, by mistake, informed Lord Granville that the Russians had a post at this bridge. Kizil Tapa is barely a mile from the bridge and, consequently, the mistake was a slight one, but it gave the Russians a pretext which they utilized to the full. The situation was serious, but Yate, relying on the identical orders issued by both Governments, did not expect the Russians to attack, and mainly occupied himself with keeping the Sariks quiet. His camp was pitched among them, five miles to the south of Pul-i-Khishti.

On March 27 the situation became increasingly serious. Alikhanoff led a force of 200 Turkomans past the left flank of the Afghans. Ghaus-u-Din rode after them with a body of Afghan horse, overtook them and held a parley with Alikhanoff, whom he reproached for deserting his fellow-Moslems and for stirring up trouble in Panjdeh. He ended by declaring that Pul-i-Khishti was his "Bridge of Heaven" and that he would fight to the death for it. Alikhanoff thereupon retired, but a fresh alarm was caused by a Russian infantry force crossing the Murghab and patrolling the right bank of that river between the Afghan outpost on the right flank of the Afghan line and the river bank. This body was met by infantry which was ready to fight, and the Russians thereupon marched their men back again. These provo-

cative acts failed to induce the Afghans to fire and thereby furnish an excuse for attacking them, which was probably the aim of Komaroff. Actually the fact that the Russians were forced to retire, raised the *moral* of the Afghan troops, and to some extent quieted the Sariks.

On the following day the Afghan Governor showed Yate an ultimatum which he had received from Komaroff. This important document ran :

> I require that, by this evening, every single man of your force shall return to within your former lines on the right bank of the river Kushk ; and that your posts on the right bank of the Murghab shall not be placed lower than the junction of the rivers Murghab and Kushk.

The Governor also showed him a second letter, written in the same handwriting as the first, in which the writer, who was apparently the Oriental Secretary of the General, asked for an interview with the Governor " without the knowledge of the British officers."

Yate, still hoping for the best and realizing the Russian appreciation of good cheer, invited Zakrchevski and his officers to an entertainment. It was given in the open between the two lines of mounted men, who were only a few yards apart, and one can imagine the feelings of the two sides as they watched the British and Russian officers toasting one another in courteous fashion, and wondered what the upshot would be. For hosts and guests alike it was a memorable banquet possibly coupled with a sense of impending tragedy.

In spite of the champagne that flowed, Zakrchevski insisted that the ultimatum must be carried out, to which Yate replied that Ghaus-u-Din had received the orders of the Amir to defend the position he now occupied, and that, as he had held it before the date of Lord Granville's telegram, he could not advise him to abandon it. Yate believed that the Russians were bluffing and would not disobey the orders of their Government; and the unfortunate Afghans considered themselves able to drive

the Russians back to Merv if attacked. But Yate has recently told me that there was yet another factor in the situation. The Russians had only recently annexed Merv and, had they retired, the Tekke Turkomans would probably have attacked and, with the assistance of the Sariks, might possibly have annihilated them.

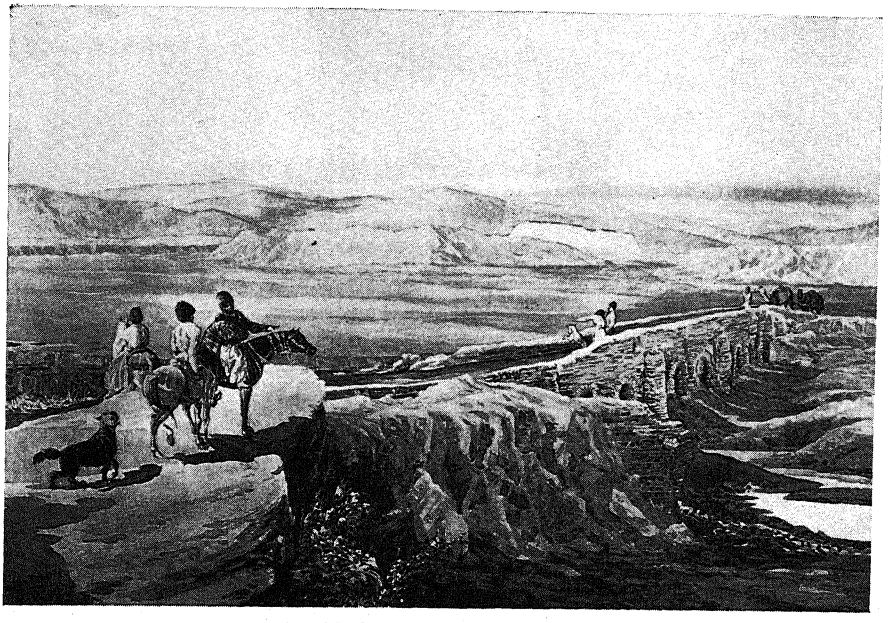
The position of the Afghans was somewhat similar, for, if they retired across the Kushk, they considered that the Sariks would attack them and that the effect on the *moral* of the Afghans would be fatal. The Afghan Governor and the General were also fairly certain that, if they abandoned the position, they would be put to death, probably with torture, by the grim Amir.

Thus the die was cast, and before dawn on the following morning—March 30—the Russians attacked the badly armed Afghans and, after an action lasting less than an hour, in which two companies were cut to pieces in their entrenchments, drove them back across the flooded Kushk with heavy loss.

The following account of the attack was given by Alikhanoff to Sir Michael O'Dwyer in 1896:

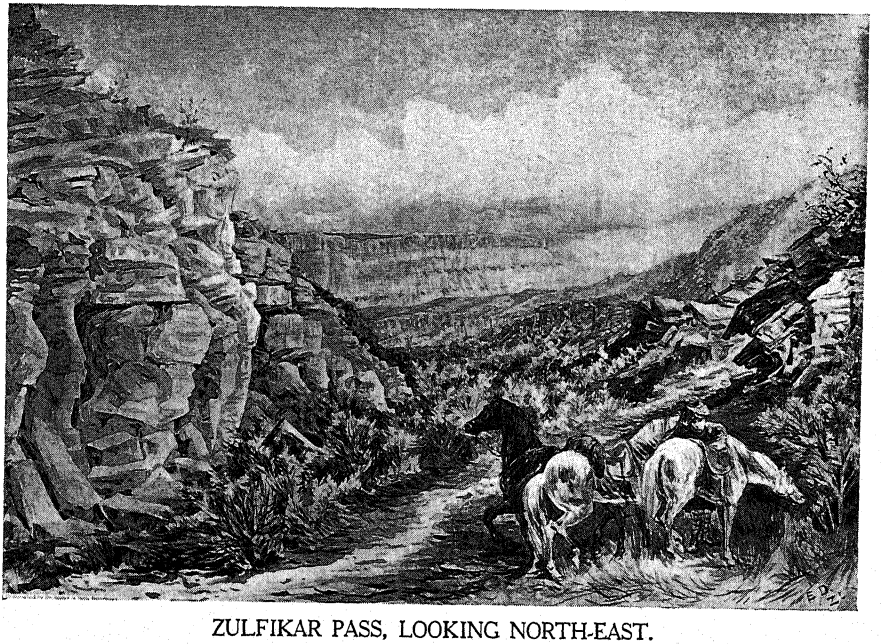
> In the early morning, upon the expiration of the ultimatum, I marched to the left flank of the Afghans with a body of Turkomans, followed by a Cossack regiment. One half of the Cossacks were dismounted and loaded, the other half held their horses. The Afghans were mounted on stallions, which were restless, and one of their carbines went off by accident or design and wounded one of the horses of the Cossacks. An officer rode up and reported this to me, and I replied, "Blood has been shed, we must now get to business." Upon this the Cossack cavalry screen withdrew and the dismounted Cossacks opened fire on the Afghan cavalry, which was thrown into confusion, broke and fled.
>
> The Afghan infantry fought like men, firing as they retired. Altogether the Afghans lost 800 men, many of whom were drowned in the flooded Kushk River, while the Russian loss was only 40 killed and wounded.

Yate had spent the evening and most of the night trying to calm the excited Sarik head-men by assuring



THE PUL-I-KHISHTI.

Taken from the left bank of the Kushk River, with Ak Tapa in the centre of the background.



ZULFIKAR PASS, LOOKING NORTH-EAST.

From sketches by Sir Edward Durand.

them that the Russians would not attack the Afghans. Just as he returned to his tent, he heard the firing of the Russian attack, the volleys of the Russians being clearly distinguishable from the weak reply of the doomed Afghans, many of whose muzzle-loading weapons were useless owing to the priming being damp from the rain. He sent out messengers to bring him information, and shortly afterwards the retreating Afghans marched up in good order and, halting outside his camp, reported their defeat and asked his advice. They then marched off and, thanks to Yate's influence, were unmolested by the Sariks.

The Russians made no pursuit, but they annexed Panjdeh by proclamation, and took over the administration. Yate decided to remain and watch events, but the Sarik head-men, who were constantly receiving messages from Alikhanoff, informed him at midday that they could no longer protect him, but would escort him clear of their encampments and then return to look after their own families. This engagement, to their credit be it said, they faithfully performed, although the temptation to make Yate a prisoner and loot his camp, as Alikhanoff offered them rewards to do, must have been strong. The fact incidentally bears testimony to the influence that British officers exert over such wild people, and was, perhaps, the only cheering episode in a deplorable tragedy.

The position of the Commission was a cruel one, for the Afghans, who naturally were unable to take the long view, considered that the British had advised them to fight but had not supported them in any way, and had allowed the Russians to cut them up. Durand sums up the affair:

> The Afghans were technically wrong[1] at Panjdeh, and gave the Russians a chance, which they promptly seized. Ridgeway, as usual, had foreseen the whole thing and warned Lumsden and the Afghans, but they were confident of being able to drive the Russians back to Merv.

[1] This evidently refers to the Afghans having developed their position on the left bank of the Kushk River.

The Amir was at that time visiting Lord Dufferin at Rawal Pindi, and Durand's entry runs:

> The Panjdeh fight was a bad business and nearly brought us into war with Russia. The Amir took it very coolly. We received the news about dinner-time one evening, and I drove at once to tell him of the slaughter of his people and the wounding and death of his general. He begged me not to be troubled. He said the loss of two hundred or two thousand men was a mere nothing, and, as for the general, that was less than nothing. There were lots of generals in Afghanistan. Afterwards he pretended to take the business as an affront only to be wiped out by the blood of many thousand Russians; but his first feeling was certainly one of indifference.

When news of this unprovoked attack on our Afghan allies was received in England, strong feeling was aroused both in Great Britain and in India. Mr. Gladstone commenced preparations for a war with Russia by the demand for a vote of £11,000,000, considered to be a great sum in those days. Fortunately, Lord Granville and M. de Giers kept their heads, and it was agreed that negotiations should be continued in London and that the oasis of Panjdeh should, in the meanwhile, be neutralized.

Thus ended the Panjdeh incident, in which a Russian General, anxious to secure for his country an oasis inhabited by Turkomans, and refusing to await the decision of the Commission, took advantage of a mere quibble to attack the miserably armed but valiant Afghans, and thereby nearly precipitated a war that would have weakened both belligerents and made the way easy for the hegemony of Germany.

Lumsden reported that he had collected all necessary information and recommended that the frontier line should be settled in London and that the Commission should delimitate the boundary in accordance with the decisions of the two Governments. The Foreign Office accepted this recommendation, and Lumsden, who was gazetted a G.C.B., was ordered home to advise the Foreign Office, while Ridgeway, who received the K.C.S.I., was appointed

Chief Commissioner, with Edward Durand as Assistant-Commissioner. The Amir was indifferent to the retention of Panjdeh, owing to the untrustworthiness of the Sariks, as he put it. Probably he was fully aware that they never had paid and never would agree to pay revenue, unless he used troops to collect it. On the other hand, he considered Zulfikar Pass, Gulran and Maruchak to be of vital importance.

The British Government, accordingly, negotiated on the lines of exchanging Zulfikar Pass for Panjdeh. This was accepted in principle, but the Russians, in their anxiety to secure cross-communications, tried to hold land that would have impaired the alleged strategical value of the pass. Fortunately this stumbling-block was finally removed by mutual concessions, and a Protocol was signed, on September 10, 1885, by Lord Salisbury, who in the meanwhile had become Foreign Minister, and the Russian Ambassador.

The Commission entered upon the second phase of its existence when, in November, 1885, a year after the arrival of the original Commission on the frontier, the British and Russian representatives met at Zulfikar Pass and set up the first two pillars, which, twenty-five years later, I saw from the Persian bank of the Hari Rud, glistening white in the rays of the setting sun.

In spite of the Protocol, there was considerable difficulty in the actual delimitation of the boundary. The Russians were naturally anxious to control the head-waters of the various canals, in order to secure sites for posts along the frontier, whereas the British wished to keep as much distance as possible between the advanced posts of the Russians and Afghans.

When the Commission had to lay down the boundary line of the Panjdeh Oasis, it was found that the Sariks had not only occupied the main valley, but had pushed up into the side valleys, to the south of the line as laid down in the Protocol. The Russians urged revision, but Ridgeway, who realized that there would be trouble

about Khoja Saleh, decided to keep something in hand for bargaining with, and insisted on adherence to the strict letter of the Protocol. The boundary was thus laid down to Dukchi, a distance of 330 miles, and the complicated question of Khoja Saleh had then to be faced.

The British Foreign Office, in concluding the Agreement of 1873, had made the mistake of ignoring the fact that the Afghans possessed lands at Khamiab, below the ferry. The position of the ferry itself was a problem, as it had disappeared, but Ridgeway identified it with Islam, situated fourteen miles above Khamiab, which was inhabited by a village population that had paid revenue to Afghanistan for more than thirty years.

The two Commissioners failed to settle this knotty point on the spot, and Ridgeway was sent to St. Petersburg as British Commissioner to negotiate terms. He found the military party adverse to a settlement which put a definite limit to their forward policy, and the atmosphere of the capital was anything but friendly. Fortunately, however, he was received by the Tsar, who was favourable to a settlement being effected.

Ridgeway wrote to Durand in August, 1887:

> I was positively shocked when I came home the first time from St. Petersburg to find that Lord Salisbury and his Cabinet wished to let the whole thing slide. It was only my personal endeavours, aided by Bradford, Currie, and Sanderson,[1] that induced them to continue the negotiations. If it had not been for the accident of my interview with the Emperor, they would not have done so. It was only when I assured the Cabinet, staking everything on it, that the Emperor intended to come to a settlement, that they agreed to let the negotiations go on. Lord Salisbury's last words to me were: "The demarcation is not worth the paper it is written on, but as you have begun, you had better finish it, if you can."

In spite of these depressing prognostications, Ridgeway finally induced the Russians to accept compensation for Khamiab in the neighhourhood of Kushk, where the

[1] Sir Edward Bradford, Sir Philip (afterwards Lord) Currie, and Sir Thomas (afterwards Lord) Sanderson.

Sariks received back their lands. Finally he was able to report that "the Amir has not lost a penny of revenue, a single subject, or an acre of land which was occupied or cultivated by any Afghan subject."

The important, but extremely difficult, task of the Afghan Boundary Commission was thus brought to a successful conclusion, and Durand sums up the results in a letter to his sister, Mrs. Rivett-Carnac, dated November, 1886 :

> We have checked Russia to some extent. It is possible that we may have somewhat accelerated her advance up to the Afghan border, but that was bound to come in a year or two, and it was better that we should bring her to the point and clear up our position, than that we should, for fear of facing the immediate difficulty, continue to take no notice and let her work her way forward up to and over the frontier, with thick darkness veiling her movements. We should now be at a perilous disadvantage in dealing with her and the Afghans, if we had not sent the Commission, and followed up that good step by getting the Amir down to Rawal Pindi.
>
> It seems strange to me that anyone who thinks about it can have a doubt on the subject. Russia can openly defy us now if she chooses, but she cannot deceive us any longer. We have brought the whole question out into the light. I am certain that we are materially stronger in India at this moment than we were two years ago, stronger not only by 10,000 English bayonets and many miles of important railway, but also, and mainly, in having examined and realized our position and our points of strength and weakness. The war scare of last year was a godsend to us.
>
> Our position when realized is not pleasing in some respects, and if you and I live a few years longer, I think we shall see some rather desperate fighting, if nothing worse. Russia has much in her favour. She is coming on overland, with nothing to overcome but geographical difficulties—a big nation absorbing a number of small weak tribes. The whole population of Russian Central Asia, from the Kirghiz steppes to Afghanistan, is considerably less than the population of the Haiderabad State. We, on the other hand, are a small body of foreigners holding two hundred and fifty millions of Asiatics in leash. The Russian position is a strong and natural position, ours is, *prima facie* at least, a weak and artificial one. But I think we shall pull through in the end, and our best chance of

doing so is to work out beforehand everything that can be worked out. The Commission was an attempt to do this and, on the whole, a successful attempt.

Don't ever believe the nonsense talked by ignorant men, at home and here, who have not gone deep into the question. They see only the present inconveniences, and do not realize the dangers we have escaped, and the priceless information of all sorts which we have gained. *Voilà.* I know I am right in this matter. for I have studied it as no one else has, except Ridgeway, in England or India, and I don't care a twopenny damn what anybody says.

Ridgeway on his side acknowledged the loyal support of Durand in the words, "You were the only man who believed in me. I have never forgotten and shall never forget what I owe to your generous friendship and appreciation."

Contrary to general expectation, the frontier laid down forty years ago has been respected by Russia, and the results of the good work done by our fellow-countrymen under such trying conditions have lasted until the present day.

CHAPTER XI

ABDUR RAHMAN AND LORD DUFFERIN

Shall I stretch my right hand to the Indus that England may fill it with gold?
Shall my left beckon aid from the Oxus? The Russian blows hot and blows cold.
The Afghan is but grist in their mill, and the waters are moving it fast,
Let the stone be the upper or nether, it grinds him to powder at last.
The Amir's Soliloquy, by SIR ALFRED LYALL.

NO Viceroy has landed in India better qualified to undertake the onerous task of governing the sub-continent than Lord Dufferin. Before reaching maturity he had travelled far and wide, gaining his first experience in Asia by serving as British Commissioner to inquire into the causes and to punish the authors of the massacres in the Lebanon and at Damascus. Later, he had been Under-Secretary of State for India for a period of two years (1864–66), and, after holding other ministerial appointments, he was selected to be Governor-General of Canada, where he made his mark as a man possessed of the highest qualities.

Only a few months after his return from Canada, he was appointed Ambassador at St. Petersburg. There he was able to study the Central Asian question from what might be termed the "northern angle." He saw clearly that the advance of Russia across the area inhabited by predatory Turkomans was not only reasonable and necessary to her interests, but also conducive to the general interests of civilization among these barbarous nomads. On the other hand he realized that, when this advance brought Russia to a country with a population occupying villages and cultivating land that paid revenue to the Amirs of Afghanistan, the situation was entirely altered and there was no longer any reason, or indeed excuse, for a further

forward movement. The grasp of this difficult problem was of especial value to the future Viceroy, who further widened his experience of the East as Ambassador to the Porte (1881) and as High Commissioner in Egypt (1882–84).

Lord and Lady Dufferin were delighted with the enthusiasm of the reception accorded to them both at the beautiful city of Bombay and at Calcutta. Durand writes:

> On 13th December [1884], Lord Dufferin arrived, receiving a tremendous welcome, and since then I have been working with him. He is a great contrast to his predecessor. We have gone through a difficult time, and I have got to like and respect him greatly. A slight, spare man, with a strong face and a good figure, and charming in manner, no shyness or awkwardness, a touch of blarney, a quick temper, a slight or more than slight lisp, and a very decided will. His speech is slow and rather hesitating, and he writes little, not having been trained to office work, but he is very quick at seizing the points of a subject; a man with more training in dealing with men than in dealing with papers. No one could be pleasanter to work with, and from the first he has treated me with the most pleasant courtesy and confidence.

The most important task confronting the new Viceroy was the critical situation on the northern frontier of Afghanistan, which has been described in the previous chapter. Realizing the great advantage of personal intercourse with the Amir, he invited Abdur Rahman to meet him at Rawal Pindi for the interchange of views and to strengthen the friendly relations existing between the British Empire and Afghanistan.

Abdur Rahman readily accepted the invitation and, in the last week of March, 1885, was welcomed on the Indian frontier and conveyed by train to Rawal Pindi. With regard to this, his first railway journey, His Highness informed Durand that it made him dizzy. It was also reported that he severely blamed his agents for not informing him beforehand of the most remarkable thing connected with it. Like the Psalmist, who also lived in a

barren and dry land, the Amir yearned for water, and was amazed at the unfailing supply that was laid on at each station. For him this was *the* supreme wonder of the journey.

Lord Dufferin was a past-master in tactful courtesy and gratified his guest by the honours that were paid to him. A welcome by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, the son of the Queen-Empress, especially delighted His Highness. He gradually realized that he was among friends, and an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence was created as the visit proceeded. At the same time the Amir never ceased to be somewhat suspicious, and refused to use the telephone that had been installed between his house and the Viceroy's camp, stoutly maintaining that it was a most useless contrivance and that he could not distinguish a word on it. Actually he considered it a machine used for spying.

Durand gives an illuminating account of the meeting:

A more unpleasant fortnight I never spent. The weather was horrible, rain and bitter wind which swamped our tents and spoilt the ceremonies. The Amir is what we always thought him, personally brave and undeniably able, doing everything himself, cruel and sensual, a great talker and rather a good talker, very much to the point with occasional flashes of wit; inordinately conceited, ready to give a lesson in anything from ruling a country to building a bridge; yet capable of appreciating a joke against himself. Excessively jealous of his independence and suspicious of anything like control by a British Agent; pleasant enough in his manner, a sort of Afghan Henry the Eighth.

It was a curious thing to see him and Lord Dufferin together. On one side the trained diplomatist with his cordial refined manner, playing a bad hand with admirable skill; on the other the rough strong Afghan, never yielding the smallest of his advantages, and striking home at times very forcibly. There was one argument that served him as a shield under all circumstances: "I wish it heartily, but you know my people; they are ignorant and suspicious. I cannot force them without danger, and I will not undertake responsibilities which I may not be able to discharge." It was very difficult to get behind that, though one knew at times that it was

a mere excuse. The net result was that we promised him arms and pecuniary help in time of war, but agreed that we would not send an army over his border at present. He was, however, warned that if Herat fell we must take our own measures, an agreement which he readily accepted, promising to help us with supplies, etc., and approving in the most emphatic terms of our sending an army corps to Quetta. He declared over and over again his determination to fight Russia to the utmost. The Afghans, he said, would never submit to a people who treated women as the Russians do. Whether he were our friend or not, the Afghans would fight the Russians more stubbornly than they fought us.

About Badghis and Panjdeh he did not care one sixpence. The Sarik Turkoman, were, he said, a lot of thieving ruffians over whom he had no more hold than we had over the Afridis. He could not depend upon them, and would not willingly fight Russia for them. All he wanted was Zulfikar, Gulran, and Maruchak. Any line we liked that left him those places he would be quite satisfied with. And now he writes, 17th May, that he accepts the line "most willingly," and that it cannot fail to be most advantageous to both of us.

The equanimity with which Abdur Rahman treated the Panjdeh incident (which occurred almost immediately after his arrival) has been referred to in the previous chapter. It amazed his hosts, but yet it was logical in the case of the ruler of Afghanistan, a country which is still in the Middle Ages, when such border troubles were of frequent occurrence.

His attitude closely resembled that of the King when the bold Percie was killed at Chevy Chase—"I trust I have within my realm five hundred as good as he." It can hardly be doubted that his being with us at this time was the main reason why this Panjdeh incident did not bring on war with Russia.

The "strange, strong creature," as Lord Dufferin dubbed him, took advantage of the opportunity to explain clearly what he could do with his people and what he could not do. He explained that if he admitted British officers to live in the country there was a grave risk of assassination by his fanatical subjects or by his enemies, who would gladly damage his reputation by such acts. In this, although his jealousy and fear of foreign interference was

probably excessive, he was undoubtedly right to a considerable extent, and, after all, it was the best and the cheapest policy for the British to adopt. Afghan hatred of foreigners is double-edged and not without its advantages, as making it certain that the people would fight desperately to defend their independence if their country were invaded by Russia.

The banquet, the first important function, is described by Lady Dufferin :[1]

> The official dinner went off extremely well. The Amir watched D. all through, and did as he did, while his personal attendant, a boy of sixteen, who always goes about with him, stood behind his chair and smoked cigarettes ! After the Queen's health had been drunk, D. gave the Amir's, when, to everybody's surprise, His Highness got up and made a very nice little speech, full of the friendship that existed between England and Afghanistan, and of good wishes for the success of the British army everywhere.

As was only right in entertaining the ruler of a particularly warlike people, there were military displays. In the first, owing to the muddy state of the ground, the troops marched past along the main road. The review, however, was held in beautiful weather with the superb Himalayas forming a lovely background. The total force numbered 20,000 men, the largest that had ever been assembled at Rawal Pindi, and the spectators included the Princes of the Punjab in their gorgeous gala robes covered with jewels. The splendid appearance of the troops and the perfect precision of their movements deeply impressed the Amir, while the elephant batteries, as was to be expected, especially delighted him.

The Durbar was the culminating function of the visit. The great tent was filled with British officers and their wives, while the Indian Princes vied with one another in their lavish display of jewellery.

After the Viceroy, with the Duke of Connaught on

[1] " Our Viceregal Life in India," p. 106. I would take this opportunity of thanking Helen, Marchioness of Dufferin, who has very kindly read this and the following chapter.

his left and the Amir on his right, had taken his seat, and the Durbar had been declared open, trays of presents consisting of clocks, watches, jewellery, rifles, guns, silver cups and precious stuffs were brought in and laid on the floor until the display reached to the entrance of the tent, outside which were drawn up elephants and guns that were included in this imperial *khalat.*

To continue the account of the ceremony as it struck Durand:

The Durbar was a peculiar torment to me. Talbot was interpreting, but suddenly the Duke of Connaught turned to me and said the Viceroy wished to know whether there was any objection to the Amir saying a few words to be heard by all. I said no—perforce —and was then ordered up to the dais to translate. The Amir made the speech which caused such enthusiasm, and he said a certain amount more, which I carefully burked. He promised to help us against the chiefs of India, as we were going to help him in Afghanistan, and pressed me to declare this. It was very difficult work turning a speech of this kind on the spur of the moment, but I think I succeeded. The affront to our loyal Sikh chiefs would have been unpardonable. During my most exalted periods a damned little musical-box bird among the presents hoisted its wings and chortled wildly, and the ladies laughed, small blame to them.

The Amir's speech, in which he pledged himself absolutely to the British in open durbar in the words, "I am ready with my army and my people to stand side by side with the British Government," made a successful ending to this historic meeting; and when, on the last day, Abdur Rahman was invested with the Grand Cross of the Star of India, in the words of Lord Dufferin, "he stuck the star through his coat, and departed with the collar over his shoulder, as pleased as a young bride with a diamond necklace."

A few weeks after the return of the Amir to Afghanistan, the diary runs:

Mackenzie Wallace[1] tells me Lord Dufferin is much blamed in Russia and elsewhere for his treatment of the Amir at Rawal

[1] Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, Lord Dufferin's private secretary.

Pindi. A friend of Bismarck's writes to Wallace that Bismarck's comment on the business was, "*C'est Offenbach tout pur. Il ne manquait pas même le sabre de mon père.*"[1]

This remark of Bismarck's proved how ignorant he was of the Central Asian problem. In view of the fact that Russia was a great aggressive Power, it was of paramount importance to keep Afghanistan tied to India, not only by bonds of interest, but also by the friendly feelings of her rulers. By the meeting at Rawal Pindi Lord Dufferin paved the way for the mutual understanding and confidence which led to the important negotiations that were to be concluded by Durand within the next decade.

The truth of the matter was realized by Lord Dufferin when he wrote: "I do not think that the Amir will ever prove actually false, for all his interests manifestly compel him to throw in his lot with us; but unfortunately with an Oriental two and two make five as often as four." Bismarck, great man as he was, did not know this.

Lord Dufferin was a judge of men and, on the day of the Durbar, Durand was formally appointed Foreign Secretary at the age of thirty-five. There were jests made at his "Boy-Secretary," but the Viceroy never ceased to congratulate himself on having a man possessed of such fine qualities at his side, and paid him the signal compliment of handing to him for perusal his private correspondence with the Secretary of State. Durand's letter of thanks to Lord Dufferin runs:

I do not think Your Lordship can realize what it was to me. I regard the Foreign Secretaryship in troublous times as the finest appointment open to a man in the Indian Civil Service, and it has been for years my dream to hold it when the Russian question came to a head.

[1] This is a reference to a play in which Catherine the Great of Russia sings "*Le sabre de mon père,*" (Chorus) "*Voici le sabre, le sabre de mon père.*"

CHAPTER XII

THE ANNEXATION OF UPPER BURMA

Boh Da Thone was a warrior bold:
His sword and his Snider were bossed with gold,

And the Peacock Banner his henchman bore
Was stiff with bullion, but stiffer with gore.

He shot at the strong and he slashed at the weak
From the Salween scrub to the Chindwin teak:

He crucified noble, he sacrificed mean,
He filled old ladies with kerosene:

While over the water the papers cried,
"The patriot fights for his countryside."—RUDYARD KIPLING.

TO the student of history, it is interesting to observe how, from very early times, great empires have established their influence over a fringe of surrounding states, to serve the same purpose that a glacis does to a fort. China was among the earliest to pursue this policy, and Tibet, Nepal, Sikkim and Burma, stage by stage, came within the sphere of influence of the Celestial Empire. As the centuries passed and the British established themselves firmly in India, China gradually lost control of some of these buffer states, her place being taken by the British Empire so far as Nepal, Sikkim and Burma were concerned; and Burma was considered to form the south-eastern portion of the glacis of the Indian Empire, just as Afghanistan served a similar purpose to the north-west.

The expansion of the province of Bengal brought the British into contact with Burma early in the nineteenth century. They made repeated efforts to establish friendly relations with the Court of Ava, but their Missions were invariably treated with marked unfriendliness and insult,

and entirely failed to attain their objects. In 1824 the Burmese, who considered themselves to be invincible, dispatched an army to expel the British from Bengal, its leader being provided with golden fetters for the special use of the Governor-General. This unprovoked invasion was countered by the dispatch of an expedition against Rangoon and the valley of the Irrawaddy, that compelled the Burman monarch to recall his army for the defence of his own territories. The operations, known as the First Burmese War, lasted for two years, but ended in the total defeat of the Burmese and the advance of the British to Yandobo, only four marches distant from the capital. There a treaty was concluded, by the terms of which Assam, Arakan and the coast of Tenasserim were ceded to the British, who also received an indemnity of one million sterling.

Two decades later, the severe lesson that had been given to the Court of Ava was forgotten and the British representative was treated with such constant contumely that he was withdrawn in 1840. Thereafter no opportunity was missed for ill-treating British subjects, and demands for redress were received with contempt. Hostilities were ultimately again forced on the British, who, in 1851, thanks to experience gained in the previous war, speedily gained a brilliant success. The results of the Second Burmese War included the addition of the rich province of Pegu to the British Empire, while independent Burma was cut off from direct access to the sea. In other words, the British completed the annexation of lower Burma.

The Burmese learned nothing, and the Third Burmese War originated in exactly the same causes as the two previous campaigns. King Thebaw, following the insensate policy of his predecessors, treated the British Resident with such insolence that, in 1879, his withdrawal became imperative. From that date, matters went from bad to worse until, in 1885, Thebaw executed a treaty with France, by the terms of which special

privileges of every description were accorded to her consuls and subjects. This could not be tolerated by the patient British, who were finally forced to take action by the imposition of a wholly unjustifiable and crushing fine on a British trading company,[1] and by the rejection of all attempts at arbitration.

On October 21, 1885, Durand's diary runs:

> The season has ended with an ultimatum to Burma. I have advocated annexation and this is agreed upon. We settled it last Sunday after breakfast, sitting in Lord Dufferin's veranda after the usual custom, with the hum of bees round us, and a sweet sunny breeze.

This ultimatum, requiring the immediate settlement of all matters in dispute, was not complied with. Thebaw, who like his predecessors underestimated the strength of the British and perhaps relied on French support, gave an unsatisfactory reply, and the troops were ordered to advance. No effective opposition was offered, and the British, who crossed the frontier on November 14, occupied Mandalay a fortnight later. King Thebaw tamely surrendered and was immediately deported to India with his family.

> On 3rd February, 1886, two months after the capture of Mandalay, we left Calcutta for Burma, the Commander-in-Chief accompanying the Viceroy. We reached Rangoon on the 6th, and "proceshed" through the town in rather sorry vehicles to Government House. It was a pretty and novel sight. The Burmans are very unlike the apathetic Indian natives, and their dress is pleasing when a number are together. Some of the women were very taking, gracefully formed and brightly attired in coloured silks, with a few flowers in the hair. Rangoon itself strikes one as much more like Europe than India. The wooden houses, somewhat resembling Swiss chalets, and the vegetation, and the numerous pagodas and *kyaungs*, or monasteries, make one feel at once that the country is wholly un-Indian.

From Rangoon the Viceregal party proceeded to Mandalay by steamer, where Durand notes:

[1] The Irrawaddy Flotilla Company.

Our men looked very well and soldierly. The Madrassis are, however, a poor lot, and afraid of the Burmans. They say "Burman man very loose with his *dah*." Our Bengal sepoys look big and powerful among them, and seem to despise their enemy thoroughly.

There can be no question that Mandalay city and palace are exceedingly fine. The general plan is admirable, the Burmans evidently admiring broad open streets and separate houses surrounded by trees and spaces. The Palace is a strange jumble of carved and gilded rooms and towers and halls, mostly dark and irregular in form, but immensely interesting.

When our troops entered the Palace, they found the room of the Queen Supayalat[1] in disorder. Andrino, the Italian Consul, says she was a nice girl at first, but was misled by others and committed dreadful crimes only to be matched in the Middle Ages.

The reception-hall is disappointing. Walking up a flight of narrow stairs one finds oneself in a small pillared hall facing the peacock throne, a golden and glass-studded platform reached by an opening in the wall from the rear. Sladen (the Resident) had to prostrate himself here, and the manager of the Flotilla Company, a fine burly Scotsman, told me he had himself done *shiko* on the floor. His head being a little too high and his feet turned outwards, a Burman official came and twisted them in from behind, and then gave them a pull which brought him on his face. That is all over, and though it is all somewhat touching, I could not but feel the pride of the power of the sword, as I saw the palace of the Lord of the White Elephant full of our big Englishmen with their Sam Browne belts and long straight blades and brown bearded faces.

As regards the political situation all is now satisfactorily settled. The Home Government has agreed to annexation yesterday by telegraph, and we have made out a rough-and-ready scheme of administration. I think all is going well, except that I feel convinced we have too few troops. The Myngun Prince will give trouble in the Shan country, and even elsewhere we have not men enough to protect the districts from dacoity. Moreover the troops are being harassed by employment as police in small detachments. We want another brigade at least. Sooner or later we shall have to send them, and the delay in pacifying the country means loss of revenue, besides discredit.

[1] The name of this terrible Queen is immortalized by Kipling in the lines:

"'Er petticoat was yaller an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat, jes' the same as Theebaw's Queen."

Durand was quite correct in his forecast of events. Burma had never been free of dacoits, the profession being considered to be quite reputable, as is shown by the fact that stage heroes are invariably successful dacoits; and the overthrow of the Government naturally reinforced these bands. It took a long time before the British were able to pacify the entire country which, it is well to remember, has an area larger than that of France, and is covered with dense forests.

Our experience in the East proves that the difficulty of organizing annexed territories varies inversely with the strength of the resistance shown. Burma proved to be no exception to this rule, but British energy and justice under the leadership of General Sir George White, finally overcame the lawlessness that had disturbed the country for centuries; the *Bohs* were hunted down and killed, and the Burmese have since enjoyed the blessings of profound peace.

In view of the former suzerainty of China over Burma, Nepal and Sikkim, the annexation of Burma by the British was a cause of active concern to the Tsungli Yamen, which had been accustomed to receive a Mission every ten years from the Lord of the White Elephant. The position was further complicated owing to hostilities that had occurred on the borders of Sikkim.

In 1886 the Chinese Government had given a reluctant consent to the dispatch of a Commercial Mission from India to Lhasa, but when the British Commissioner appeared on the scene, not only was the way barred by the Tibetans, but intense hostility was displayed. The question was referred back to Peking, and a solution of the difficulty was found, Great Britain on her part refraining from insistence upon the Mission carrying out its task, while China agreed to waive her shadowy rights over Burma.

The Sikkim question, however, remained to be settled. The truculent Tibetans, with a view to preventing the British Mission from even reaching their frontier, had

invaded Sikkim and constructed a fort inside its territory. Upon the withdrawal of the Mission they naturally considered that the British had retreated before the might of China and proceeded to strengthen the fort. Expostulations were tried time and again without result, and, finally, a force was dispatched from India which captured the fort without difficulty, and subsequently inflicted a complete defeat on a large Tibetan host that attempted to recapture it.

After this British success had been secured, the approach of a Chinese Amban was announced, and Durand was dispatched to examine the question in all its bearings and find some reasonable solution.

He described his arrival at Gangtok in November, 1889 :

I was met by the Raja some way outside his palace, which is a mere hut. He is an ugly man with a natural hare-lip which gives him a very sinister appearance. It is a complete division of the lip from the nose downwards, through which the upper teeth project. He cannot speak a word of Hindustani and has no appearance of intellect. He wore a Chinese mandarin's hat with the coral button.

The Rani, who is a Tibetan, is a most amusing little person, full of fun and mischief, and rather good-looking, with bright brown eyes and ruddy cheeks. But she has a bad temper and her morals are imperfect. However, the Raja does not mind and is completely under her influence. They tell me she was furious when she heard that I had warned him that he had no connexion with Tibet, but she asked me to tea the same afternoon and was very pleasant, finally volunteering to come with me to England to see the Queen's jewels. I did my best to make friends with her, ate and drank all the nasty things she offered me, including salt buttered tea and a greasy sort of macaroni, which I had to eat with chopsticks. She came over to see some athletic sports in the camp, but she is a thorough little rebel and will use all her influence against us.

The Amban duly arrived at Gnatong, where Mr. A. W. Paul received him and opened negotiations, and Durand arrived there a few days later, on Christmas Eve.

He gives the following really beautiful description of the march :

Through cloudland. We had climbed up during the afternoon, Manners Smith [1] and I, to Seduchen, by a road which led us through deep wooded glens and across the face of overhanging cliffs, while the water roared on the rocks hundreds of feet below. Nearer and nearer, as the road wound upward, we saw above our heads the dense grey canopy which hid the hill-tops ; and at last, just as the sunset faded, we felt the sudden chill that told us we had reached the threshold of cloudland, and a swirl of windswept vapour eddied and closed around us.

That night it was deadly cold, and we sat close in to our camp fire of rhododendron logs, scorching our legs and faces, while the clouds enveloped us, and a fine rain fell at intervals. By the morning the clouds had broken a little, and there were gleams of fitful sunshine as we ate a hearty breakfast in the open, where our fire had been. Then we mounted our commissariat mules, poor beasts, and turned their heads up the steep rocky road which leads to Lingtu and Gnatong. It was a weary zigzag climb, through a thick forest of trees and underwood, and as we went on, hour after hour, chilled by the clinging grey shroud which had again settled upon us soon after our start, we were able to realize to some extent the endurance our troops had shown when they toiled up that almost perpendicular hill-side, in doubt and mist and snow, to storm the fort five thousand feet above them.

We had ridden eight or nine miles, always upward, and our Bhutan ponies, which we had mounted at the half-way point, were beginning to show by their frequent stoppages and laboured breathing that they felt the rarefaction of the air. We were not exerting ourselves, and were comfortable enough, except for a slight feeling of tightness about the chest. All at once, looking upwards, we were struck by the deep dull blue of the cloud through which we were climbing, and then, in the twinkling of an eye, before we had the slightest idea of what was about to happen, the cloud melted around us, and fell swiftly away from our feet, and we stood in a glare of sunlight that for a moment smote us blind.

Never, to the day of my death, shall I forget the sight that unfolded itself before my eyes, as they gradually became accustomed

[1] Manners Smith made his name as a soldier and frontier officer, as described in Chapter XIV. I have to thank Sir Charles Bell, who has read this section of the chapter.

to the light. We stood close to the summit of a precipitous peak, Lingtu, which shut out the northern sky. To the east and south, two hundred feet below, a white sea of cloud stretched away to the horizon, its smooth surface broken here and there by rounded billows. In parts it rather resembled a snow-field, so opaque and firm and still that one felt as if an army could march across it; but the lines were too blurred and rounded for snow, and near at hand the mass was stirred by a faint but perceptible motion.

To our right a great purple cliff, clothed with pines, jutted out into the sea, the cloud breakers scattering slowly about its base; and beyond, to the westward, rose the majestic form of Kinchinjanga. The clouds lay twelve thousand feet above the sea-level, hiding from sight the little world of men, but they hardly touched the knees of the mountain monarch. Fourteen thousand feet of rock and ice and snow stood out above them, cleaving a sky of deep and dazzling blue. From the very crest of the central peak a "snow banner," like a puff of white smoke, slowly floated off and melted into the heavens. But any attempt to describe the scene is useless. It was too utterly beautiful, too strange and glorious and great, for human words.

He was a British subaltern, but he stood gazing in silent awe. After a time I saw his lip quiver, and his brown eyes fill with tears. Then he turned to me with a far-away look in his face, as though he had seen beyond the veil, and spoke very slowly and solemnly :— "By Jove, that's rippin', Kinchinjanga in cotton wool."

The diary continues :

To-day I called on the Amban who is in tents. We were received with a salute and a guard of honour, and ushered into a little red circular tent, where we took our seats, the Amban and I on a dais covered with leopard skins and our companions to right and left—Indian durbar fashion. The Amban was exceedingly pleasant, nothing could have been more courteous and cordial than his manner. We talked about all sorts of things, except business.

Later he writes :

Instead of showing any regret, or appreciation of our extreme forbearance, the Amban supported the action of the Tibetans and put forward on their account claims to suzerainty in Sikkim. He and his staff think that we are afraid of them. We are bound to take our stand upon the ground that the Tibetans opposed by force

a Mission China had agreed to, that they then made war upon us, and that China did nothing effectual to stop or punish them. Therefore any rights that Tibet or China may have had in Sikkim, are necessarily forfeited—and we will not discuss them.

In a letter to Mrs. Rivett-Carnac from Gnatong, Durand writes :

My Chinaman very obstinate, but I think I shall bring him round. With all his pleasantness he is not disinclined to be impertinent, and I have had to pull him up sharply once or twice. I forget whether I told you of our last brush. It would have amused you. We were talking in the most friendly way a few days ago, and he said, "Well if I cannot work out a settlement, I will memorialize the throne to send an abler man." I laughed and said that would be useless. If he could not do it, no one could. I don't know whether he thought I was chaffing him, and lost his temper, but he answered that he was only a civil mandarin, and that a military mandarin might manage better. Then, in case I had not understood the hint, he had the cheek to say, laughingly but meaningly, that unless he and I came to terms, it might be a question of war between England and China. I replied, also laughing, that I should regret such an occurrence, but that I should have no doubt as to the result, that he would find the English much better at fighting than negotiating. I added that a war between England and China would not be decided in Sikkim, but where the last war was decided. Then he shut up like a telescope, with profuse apologies for his "joke." I don't think he will try frightening me again. But it is hopeless work dealing with a Chinaman unless you can put a pistol to his head. He lies and evades, and changes the conversation in the most amusing but effective way. Good-bye. This climate does not suit me, but the views are splendid.

I recollect Durand telling me that, on another occasion, finding the Amban particularly truculent, he invited him to come for a stroll and took him to the edge of a great pit in which the Tibetans who had been killed in action by the British had been buried. He there pointed the moral, and the Amban returned mild and friendly.

Not that his intrigues ceased, for, while a guest of the British, he summoned the Deb Raja of Bhutan to attend the meeting. This typically Oriental attempt "to assert

openly in our presence the influence of China over Bhutan," was defeated and gradually the Chinese representative realized that his intrigues were doomed to failure.

Durand writes:

> The Amban evidently dares not give way about the "rights" of Tibet. "He was," he said, "only a guest in Lhasa—not a master—and he could not put aside the real masters." He has no force to speak of, and he knows the Tibetans have turned upon a Chinese Resident before now. . . .
>
> There is one thing I must add. The way our men treat the Tibetans should, I think, do good. The prisoners are utilized as hewers of wood and drawers of water, but they are very kindly treated, and are on the best of terms with our soldiers. We released a large batch of them on Christmas Day, and they went off with their pockets full of small coin and food, all given by the men of the Derbyshire Regiment. One poor fellow who had lost a leg and was a special favourite, had a large roll of rupees. They were, at first, like wounded wild beasts. Now it is all laughter and chaff.

A few days later Durand said good-bye to the Amban and returned to Calcutta, where a satisfactory Convention was finally negotiated on the lines indicated in his letters.

CHAPTER XIII

DURAND AS FOREIGN SECRETARY

His years but young, but his experience old;
His head unmellow'd, but his judgment ripe;
And, in a word (for far behind his worth
Come all the praises that I now bestow),
He is complete in feature, and in mind,
With all good grace to grace a gentleman.—SHAKESPEARE.

THE chief anxiety of an officer stationed on a distant frontier, as I know from prolonged experience, is the ignorance prevailing at head-quarters on matters to which his life is devoted, and about which he has presumably gained some knowledge. Such ignorance is, more or less, inevitable, as the men at head-quarters rarely possess the local knowledge and point of view, which is frequently all important.

Durand was the exception to the rule, being ever keen, not only to visit the outposts, but to meet and discuss frontier problems with the men who were experts on them. Thus, in the spring of 1887, he visited the southern section of the North-West Frontier, with which his name was destined to be imperishably associated.

The first stopping-place on his journey was Sibi, situated at the foot of the historical Bolan Pass. He writes:

Sunset that evening on the *put* (level salty plain) was very striking, and I thought with wonder of the march of our force in 1839 across this trackless, treeless desert, with its burning heat and mirages. The same thought occurs to me constantly in Baluchistan. It is extraordinary that such a force, equipped as it was, could ever have reached Quetta. It was very interesting to me seeing all the places mentioned in my father's journal, and I longed for a peep at the past, only forty-eight years ago, when he was a young lieutenant of Engineers, and the country beyond the Indus was as unknown

as the interior of Africa, while, between India and our advancing columns, lay the independent states of the Punjab and Sind, with 100,000 fighting men ready to turn upon us at any moment.

I slept in the train and started in the morning by the Bolan Railway. It was a very enjoyable day, notwithstanding the fact that we spent it in a wilderness of stones. The line winds along the bed of the Pass, where heavy floods often occur, as they did in '39. At times the conglomerate cliffs narrow until they are within twenty or thirty yards of each other. At others the pass opens out into a bare plain, where somehow or other the camels and sheep of the nomad Brahuis find a subsistence. The yearly migration was beginning, and we came upon several little encampments of black tents, and parties of long-haired patriarchs marched alongside the line of the rail. It was an odd juxtaposition of the old and the new worlds.

The weakness of the line seems to be that there is no water for some miles below the Pass, so the water for the engines has to be pumped up. The work was, I hear, a great marvel to the natives. The sahibs, they said, can do many things, but if they can make water run up hill they are cleverer than we thought. When the pipes were laid and the pumping began not a drop would flow, and the natives smiled. As a matter of fact a fakir who owned the water head and objected to the diversion of his gains, had managed to stuff one of the pipes with stones and rubbish before it was laid. The engineers bored holes until they found where the obstruction was and removed it. Then the water flowed; the fakir cursed, and the natives wondered and said, "Truly the Sirkar is great."

After spending a day or two at Quetta, which was then very different from the fine cantonment which I saw nine years later, Durand and Barnes proceeded to Kala Abdullah, whence

we started to ride over the Khojak to Chaman. The road winds along a stony bed, dotted with wild pistachio trees, and rises very slowly until near the Kotal. Then there is a bit of made zigzag road, which is steep, and, after a mile or two of this, one stands on the summit and looks down on the plains of Afghanistan. From the foot of the hill the ground slopes away in a glacis to the level plain which is bounded on the left by the red sands of the desert, and to the north by ranges of hills which hide Kandahar. There was little cultivation to be seen, and few villages, but a good many

black tents. In every direction dust "devils" were dotting the surface. I counted over forty of them at once.

The descent of the pass on the Chaman side is very steep, and it was no wonder that the lowering of the guns in '79 gave much trouble. The cliff down which they went lies to the right of the road. A five-mile ride brought us to our frontier post at Chaman, a small mud fort held by Achakzai levies. We stayed there some little time and they gave us some tea. Then we rode back, reaching Kala Abdullah after a long canter a little before sunset. I was very happy to be in the saddle again, but got shockingly scorched by the sun, hands and face, and, as usual, especially my nose, which now looks like a bottle of whisky a day.

On the return journey,

We were taken through "Mud Gorge," where we had to walk a few yards, as they had removed the rails to line a small tunnel. This mud gorge has been a most troublesome thing to manage, and Captain Whiteford, who accompanied us, has done it well. So we went on to near Chappar, where we met Scott who took the line through the Chappar Rift. This is a work to be proud of. The "rift" is exactly what its name implies. The rounded rocky hill, about one thousand feet high at a guess, has split apart, leaving tremendous cliffs on each side and a narrow fissure at the bottom, where a stream runs in rainy weather. At the north side the fissure has a twist in it, and the rail has been taken straight into the broader part of the rift by a tunnel through the rock. Then it runs along one side of the cliff, the left, going in and out of tunnels, until it reaches a point where the bed of the stream lies two hundred feet below. There the line crosses a dizzy bridge, and plunges into the bowels of the rock again, to emerge at last with a great circular sweep into the plain below.

This delightful day ended my trip to Baluchistan which enabled me to appreciate more fully the great value of the magnificent position at Quetta, and the civilizing work of Sir Robert Sandeman and his officers. Finally, the two railways have completely altered the political situation in our favour. Altogether the Quetta position must be one of the strongest in the world, provided that troops are available to hold it, and no enemy would be foolish enough to attack it, if so occupied.

At this period Durand did not realize the greatness of Sandeman, who, like many enthusiasts, was perhaps

somewhat lacking in tact. But shortly after his departure from India he wrote the following tribute in a letter to Lord Roberts:

I believe Sandeman is one of the biggest men we have had in India, and it is the great regret of my Indian career that I did not understand him sooner. If he had been Chief Commissioner of the Border we should not have had all these risings and expeditions.

A year later, when returning to India from leave, Durand spent some days at Aden and then visited Perim and the Somali coast. At that time there was considerable rivalry with the French, who had established themselves at Jibuti and were anxious to take over the adjacent port of Zeila which, however, was retained by the British. Aden, situated in a waterless land, which grows practically no supplies, depends entirely on the Somali coast for its food. The prosperity of this strip of coastal land was thus of considerable importance to Aden, just as important as Egypt was to Rome.

At Berbera, Durand notes:

The population, among whom were a few Arabs, seemed very peaceable. They crowded round us chattering and salaaming, and were evidently much interested in the three English ladies, who walked through their huts. An officious constable tried to scatter them and was stopped. Whereupon men and women followed chaffing him.

The position of the French, only a few miles farther west, was quite different:

At Jibuti they are living on a small quasi-island, four hundred yards from the shore, and Ersas come and brandish spears at them. Captain Geminet is now in harbour with his officers shooting. They cannot shoot near their own ports, but come to us and are quite safe. The relations between the French and English officers are most cordial.

Durand, as was ever his wont, went carefully into each question with the man on the spot, and reached Bombay with valuable information on these outlying posts of the Indian Empire. He told me that as a mark of appre-

ciation for his services, the Finance Department objected to paying him more than his leave pay, unless the Viceroy's special sanction was obtained for him to draw full pay while inspecting the Somali coast. This he refused to apply for; he considered that it was the business of the Finance Member to act fairly by him, and he was too proud to trouble Lord Dufferin with a matter affecting his pay.

* * * * *

Durand told me on more than one occasion that the most important internal scheme that he originated and carried through, was the creation of the Imperial Service Troops. His first reference to the question is contained in a letter to Sir Frederick Roberts, dated May 27, 1887:

I was speaking to Mackworth Young[1] a few days ago about doing something to utilize the armies of Native States, and he said he thought the Punjab States would gladly offer us troops, to be associated with ours, and drilled, if we would give them good weapons. I am in favour of giving breech-loaders to picked bodies of Native State troops, the numbers being of course limited, and the conditions being, first, efficiency of drill and equipment up to a given standard; secondly, readiness to be called out whenever required for service.

The Viceroy, to whom I spoke yesterday, has no objection to my authorizing the Punjab Government to send up any proposal submitted by the States, but he wishes me to ask your opinion first as to the expediency of trying to bring about any measures of the kind I have described. Would you mind telling me whether you think the general line right, and the opportunity a good one?

To this the great soldier replied a week later:

I am in favour of utilizing the armies of Native States within certain limits, and I consider the present opportunity a good one for initiating such a policy. The Native States might be informed that the Government have in view the training of a certain number of troops in each State to be associated with our own soldiers, or made such use of as Government might decide in time of trouble.

Not only in the Punjab but throughout India, we might fairly count on valuable reinforcements; the material is ready at hand, and with sufficient training would augment our military strength substantially. The more we can bind up the interests of Native

[1] Sir Mackworth Young, later Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab.

States with our own, the better, and the fact of their soldiers being associated with ours would do far more to bring this about than anything.

Nor did Roberts confine himself to writing, for he set to work to inspect the armies maintained by the Native States, from Mysore in the south to Kashmir in the north. The result of these tours was to confirm him as to the value of the scheme from more than one point of view. He also notes :

The one anxiety of the ruling chiefs whom I have met, has seemed to be that they may be thought worthy to co-operate with us in whatever way we consider they can best assist us.

In another letter, Roberts writes to Durand about the Transport Corps of the Maharaja of Jaipur :

I must tell you that it is A1. We have nothing so complete. The ponies are a good useful stamp, and I was surprised to find that they had cost so little on the average, only about 90 rupees each. The carts are after a serviceable pattern and, I should hope, would stand rough work. The reserve stock is complete in every respect, and the corps could move off from Jaipur at a few hours' notice, wanting for nothing. I have never seen anything so good, and I had great pleasure in telling the Maharaja so.

Subsequently Durand writes to Roberts :

The scheme is a fine scheme if rightly worked. It is useless, or worse, if made a mere political sham, or if worked on rigid, unsympathetic pipeclay lines. In this, as in everything else in India, the soldier and the civilian should go together trying to understand each other—and realizing that they are all Englishmen working for one end.

Strong opposition was shown to the formation of the new force, mature British opinion being sometimes unduly conservative. But Lord Dufferin, at a great meeting of the Punjab chiefs, declared himself in favour of training the pick of the troops of the Indian princes, and announced the acceptance of their loyal offers on behalf of Government.

Two years later he inspected the recently raised force. Durand wrote to his sister :

The Punjab State Troops are quite astonishing. Drill like the Guards—every man together. They are just as keen as mustard, and the result took me aback. Such fine men too, big Sikhs and Mussulmans full of pride in themselves. Their officers had only one request—"Send us on service the next frontier expedition and let us show you we are fit to fight." I was greatly pleased with my army.

Finally, in 1893, Durand was able to write :

That the troops are useful we have proved in Hunza. The original criticism was that such troops must be rubbish, and useless against Russians or anyone else. Now, in spite of all the ridicule and depreciation levelled at us, we have succeeded in turning out, in four years, such regiments that our generals, from Lord Roberts downwards, have given them the highest praise. There is no further question as to their being good. Yet these regiments are not contingents of the old type. They are in most States emphatically State forces, with Indian officers and a very large proportion of Indians in the ranks, and in no State do we officer the regiments with Englishmen. Of course on service this condition of things must be modified. You must then have British officers to lead, in one form or another. But the troops are State troops, and not contingents of the old type. No one is stronger about this than I am, for I have, so to speak, inherited the traditions of the Mutiny.

In another letter he writes :

Brackenbury,[1] the chief opponent of the scheme, now says that the troops are so good that we ought to reduce some Madras and Bombay regiments. That is about the end, I hope, of the first great objection to what used to be called "Durand's fad."

Viewed from another aspect, the raising of the Imperial Service Troops gave to the princes and nobles of India a chance of gratifying their martial instincts and of resuming the profession of arms which they, like the Englishman of good family, held to be the noblest in which they could engage.

[1] General Sir Henry Brackenbury was the Military Member.

And how did the Imperial Service Troops stand the searching test of the Great War? They contributed 26,000 men to the number of combatants sent overseas, and, in addition, many of their units were employed in India, thus releasing British and Indian troops for the fighting line. Some 1,700 officers and men fell on active service, and more than 500 officers and men received decorations for valour in the field. The brilliant services of the Bikanir Camel Corps in the Suez Canal zone and the capture of Haifa at the gallop by the Mysore Lancers will never be forgotten. It is worthy of note that the Imperial Service Troops also rendered valuable services in the Third Afghan War in 1919, and thus assisted in defending India from aggression. This was one of the inspiring ideas present in the mind of Durand, who, if he did nothing else, deserves a niche in the Temple of Fame for the statesmanlike policy of trusting the princes of India to serve shoulder to shoulder against the enemies of the Kaiser-i-Hind.

It remains to add that Durand strongly supported Major (afterwards Sir Howard) Melliss, the first British officer to undertake the difficult and delicate task of training the troops of Indian States on modern lines. He met with considerable opposition, which he gradually overcame, and one of his letters, which was written during the difficult period, runs: "Never will you have cause to regret having started this movement. On the contrary, you will, in time to come, look back on it as the biggest and most successful thing of all the reforms or measures you initiated during your Indian career." This was a remarkable forecast, and all honour to Melliss and his officers for making it come true.

* * * * *

Durand was always anxious to promote good relations between all classes at Simla, and mainly on this account, in 1886, he organized Association football.

It seemed hopeless at first, the men I asked said I was mad, but at last they became keener, and we had some capital games.

Most of us were quite new to the Association game, but it has done me much good and made me very fit.

By 1888 football was firmly established, and Durand generously presented a trophy—a silver football—to be competed for annually at Simla. In 1895 this trophy was gained outright by the Highland Light Infantry for winning three years in succession; and, four years later, a second trophy was won by the Black Watch. Durand now presented a third trophy which could not be won outright, and, as the years passed, the Durand Football Tournament attracted a very large number of entries, and has long been the leading event in Association football in India.

In 1921, owing to the cost of bringing teams to Simla and for other reasons, Durand was asked to transfer the trophy to the Army Sports Control Board. Simla, however, protested against the transfer, and so the matter was dropped. In any case Durand, who revelled in the game which he played with much success until he left India, had stimulated interest in football, with all its good fellowship and manliness, to an extent that, in his later years, he looked back upon with much pleasure and also with wholly justifiable pride.

To show the spirit animating him, he wrote two years before his death:

Two of my best supporters in the original scheme thirty-three years ago were a sporting tailor and a man employed in a brewery, who were both keen players from London clubs. I got somewhat criticized at first for mixing myself up with them, but they organized a town team, and I organized one of young officers and Foreign Office clerks, and we won after a hard fight, and the thing caught on.

Colonel K. S. Dunsterville, one of the original players, has written me the following account:

Durand was a splendidly built big man, fond of games and hard exercise which kept him fit. In the 'eighties, when at Simla, he started football, getting together a team from young subalterns attached to the Foreign Office, men on duty at Simla like myself

or on leave and from the various firms and offices. Durand was the mainstay of the team. With all his official work he found time to collect the team for each game. He himself always played centre-forward and was very good in the position, and also as captain. He used to arrange games against the Gunners at Jutogh, Army Headquarters, the Simla Volunteers and various regimental and scratch teams. We played on the Gymkhana ground down at Annandale, several hundred feet below the Mall. Instead of having his pony there to carry him up the stiff hill road after the game, not content with the strenuousness of the game, he and I always shinned up the steep hill to his house, Knockdrin, at the top. He was also a good lawn tennis player and played regularly most afternoons. His exercise never interfered with his work, but he snatched a brief spell of it and that kept him fit. I shall never forget him at an Investiture of the Star of India. He was Secretary of the Order, and as he marched in wearing his robes and took a part in the ceremony he was a magnificent figure.

Among the players whom Durand selected for special service at Gilgit, and who fully justified his choice by winning the V.C., were Manners Smith and Boisragon, whose deeds of valour will be detailed in the following chapter. He always spoke with affection of his football players and with pride of their achievements. These feelings were fully reciprocated, for the best class of Englishman admires the man who works hard and plays hard, and Durand was emphatically a man of this type.

During the years Durand served under Lord Dufferin, their mutual esteem and friendship had steadily increased. Not long after their connexion began, a high official asked the Viceroy how he liked Durand. His reply, given in his best whimsical manner, ran :

> Durand is a splendid fellow and I think he likes me, for he is beginning to let me into the secrets of the Foreign Office.

Before leaving India, Lord Dufferin offered Durand a K.C.S.I. As, however, Aitchison had expressed the opinion that he was too young, Durand declined the honour with typical self-denial, and was gazetted a K.C.I.E. on

January 1, 1889. As will appear, this act of abnegation was destined to have unfortunate results.

The departure of Lord Dufferin was keenly felt by Durand, who frequently spoke of his sagacity, his wit, his gift for judging men correctly, and his kindness. Among the sayings that he treasured was: "When in doubt, play for safety under the cushion." Of the retiring Viceroy's very high opinion of his Foreign Secretary I quote the following entry in the diary:

When I last went to the Viceroy, after our work was ended, he said: "Now, Durand, I am going to say something which will surprise you, but it is literally true. If I were ever Prime Minister of England, the first thing I would do would be to make you Viceroy of India."

Though he had spoken intentionally and deliberately, *à propos de bottes*, I did not at first take it quite seriously, and replied laughingly that I should have no objection. He then went on to assure me he had thought carefully over what he had said, and that he meant it most seriously, and that he thought I had exactly the qualities required. He added: "I never shall be Prime Minister of England, but I hope I may yet live to see you in my place." It was certainly a striking compliment.

After returning from Sikkim, Durand began work under the new Viceroy, and writes:

Lord Lansdowne is very pleasant. A little man with a keen face, very straight and rather peremptory. Quick at making up his mind. Might be hasty, I fancy. Most agreeable to work with.

In the autumn of 1889 the heavy work of the Foreign Office at last broke down Durand. He was attacked by pleurisy and pneumonia, very nearly died, and was sent home on long furlough. His recovery was slow, as walking was hindered by a clot in the leg. However, three months at Torquay effected a good deal; they were followed by a year spent in Cornwall.

We are at Greatwood on the Fal, a place very out of the way, but lovely. I never saw anything like the primroses and

violets and gorse and hyacinths. The grounds slope down to the sea, which looks like an inland lake, the outlet being closed by Trefusis Point. It is a perfect summer house and the children delight in it.

Durand completed his happiness by sailing a cutter up and down the coast, enjoying, with his children round him, the only long leave that he ever took. Here, then, we may leave him to recover his health and prepare to do still more important work for the England that he loved with a passionate devotion too deep for words.

CHAPTER XIV

THE NORTHERN LAND GATE OF INDIA

"Mighty monarchs like myself and Alexander the Great, whose descendant I am, never leave their kingdoms."—THE THUM OF HUNZA.

FROM one point of view, the advance of Russia southwards and the activity displayed by her officers in debatable lands have been a main theme of this work. Her aggressive policy certainly induced the British rulers of India to explore and to lay down, before it was too late, the political and strategical bounds of the Indian Empire, for whose safety they were responsible.

Lord Lytton, to whom the credit of realizing the importance of the Quetta position is mainly due, was also foresighted enough to see that it was necessary to establish British influence in the semi-independent states bordering Kashmir, through which ran the northern land gate of India. In 1878 he founded a Political Agency at Gilgit, situated on the chief route from Chinese Turkistan and the Pamirs to India, and although Major Biddulph was ultimately withdrawn from a position that was dangerously isolated, he had collected data on the country and its inhabitants which paved the way for further developments.

In 1885 Colonel (later General Sir William) Lockhart, making Gilgit his head-quarters, visited the robber states of Hunza and Nagar and, crossing the Hindu Kush, explored Wakhan; he also visited Chitral. Thanks to his genial personality and fine presence he established British influence on a good footing in these remote states, besides submitting valuable reports as to the limits of the Amir's jurisdiction and the nature of the passes leading into Badakshan, the Pamirs, Wakhan and Chinese Turk-

istan. Captain (now Sir Francis) Younghusband was employed later on this important task, and, in spite of Russian hostility when he carried his exploration on to the Pamirs (where he was arrested by Captain Yanoff), the passes were visited and examined.

Durand wrote :

As a result of these surveys I consider that the Kashmir frontier, though long in a sense, is probably the strongest in the world. It is formed of a tremendous mass of mountains with only two ways of entrance into Kashmir—by Gilgit and then across the Indus, and by the Karakoram Pass into Leh. The roads in each case are very difficult, and could be destroyed at places with a few pounds of dynamite, so that nothing could pass, not even a single climber, unopposed.

In 1888 Colonel Algernon Durand was dispatched on a mission to Gilgit to inquire into the causes that had led to the recent rebellion of Hunza and Nagar against Kashmir. The two little states, situated in the same valley and divided by a swift river, bore an evil reputation for the merciless manner in which they raided not only Kashmir but also Chinese Turkistan, whose inhabitants they sold into slavery or else killed. Relying on their remoteness, and the inaccessibility of the country —the saying ran that an army must have wings to reach it—their rulers were naturally proud and truculent, and were, consequently, most difficult to deal with.

Algernon Durand was hospitably received by the Thum of Nagar, and wrote to his elder brother :

You would enjoy the country. The views are grand, Rakapushi, 25,000 feet high, rising close to me. Every valley running into the main one is closed by gigantic glaciers, above which, for thousands of feet, rise grand walls of snow terminating in sharp peaks, some too steep to carry snow. Below are occasional fir forests and, below this again, bare hill-sides, the lower slopes of which are one mass of cultivation. Hunza lies across the river, which runs in a gorge several hundred feet deep, and near Hunza itself the lower hills recede and there is a large green amphitheatre that is one mass of fruit trees and cultivation.

Nagar lies on a side stream, three miles off the main valley, and is a collection of mud huts on a small hillock, topped by the Raja's palace—the road up to which runs through a series of doorways, which would make an assault difficult to local enemies. The palace stairs consist of the notched trunk of a tree, up which you climb, emerging through a square hole on to the story above. Jafar Khan and his son are much alike—not a bad profile which is rather Grecian.

Safdar Ali Khan, Thum of Hunza, was haughty and unfriendly, and, to a question, gave the reply that is quoted as the motto of this chapter. It is interesting to know that, apart from the Aryan blood that flows in the veins of many of these mountain tribes, the chiefs have intermarried with the leading families of Badakshan. Now this country was the classical Bactria, which was conquered by Alexander, whose wife Roxana was the daughter of a Bactrian chief. It also remained a Greek kingdom for two centuries after the death of the great conqueror.

The intrusion of the British officer, who was regarded as a spy, was resented by the Thum of Hunza, who contemplated the murder of the party and, with this object, surrounded their camp with armed parties at night. However, he changed his mind at the last minute, and Algernon Durand returned to Gilgit in safety and continued his tour to Chitral. In the autumn, having travelled over a thousand miles, he again reached Gilgit, where he heard that a Russian officer was visiting the Thum of Hunza—a report that was subsequently proved to be true—and proceeded to India to make his report.

In the spring of 1889 Algernon Durand again went to Gilgit with instructions to re-establish the Gilgit Agency. The elder brother wrote:

> The object is to gain thoroughly good information of all that is going on upon our extreme right, and so to establish our political influence in the countries immediately under the northern Hindu Kush, that there may be no risk of foreign interference or intrigue among these principalities, which are now little more than nominally

subject to Kashmir. We need fear no invasion by this route, but we might have threats and annoyance, and a strong outpost in Gilgit is necessary. In connexion with the scheme for arming and utilizing the armies of native chiefs we have an opportunity of tightening the hold of Kashmir upon these outlying districts, which for the future will be kept in order by a properly equipped force, supervised by an English officer. Hitherto, the Kashmir troops at Gilgit, though numerous, have been a worthless rabble.

Algernon Durand, who had decided upon the course to be adopted, set to work to inspect the Kashmir troops (about one half of whom were useless, owing to sickness or old age), and to secure good housing, good rations and regular pay for the garrison. The Kashmir officers—who lived by robbing their men—and the corrupt officials were naturally hostile to the new order, and spread the rumour far and wide that the Agency was not a permanency. But gradually British tenacity and honesty prevailed, and in time the newly trained Kashmir Imperial Service Troops replaced the worthless soldiers, a mule track was sanctioned, and the intriguing Kashmir officials were dismissed.

Algernon Durand, who was determined to prove that the British had come to stay, built an Agency house, laid out a garden, in which he took the keenest interest, and spared no trouble or expense to make a comfortable home for himself and his small band of officers. Among other things, he insisted on dressing for dinner, and a member of his staff was evidently struck by this for he wrote home: "We dress for dinner—and the dinner is worth dressing for."

Algernon Durand realized from the first that the robber chiefs of Hunza and Nagar, who relied for defence on the extraordinary natural difficulties of the country, and on Russia, would certainly challenge the new order, which was eminently distasteful to them. The murder of the favourite son of the Thum of Nagar by his brother was followed by disturbances that threatened an outbreak of hostilities. Durand promptly marched two stages to the Hunza boundary, strengthened the Kashmir fort

of Chalt, and constructed a rough mule track across the difficult country to his rear. For the time being hostilities were averted, but the whole frontier was much excited by these events and by the appearance of a strong party of Russian Cossacks in the Pamirs.

In view of the threatening situation, Algernon Durand was reinforced by 200 men of the 5th Gurkhas and by two mountain guns. He was also given fifteen picked British officers, and, thus strengthened, his position was very different. His instructions were to inform the chiefs of Hunza and Nagar that military roads would be constructed through their territory to ensure the safety of the frontier and that, although there would be no interference with their internal affairs, failing compliance with these orders, troops would enter their country and make the roads.

These instructions signified that the challenge of the slave-dealing chiefs would be taken up and that, unless they yielded to British demands, there would be war. The Thums refused to yield, the reply of Safdar Ali running that he was a servant of the Great White Tsar, that the British had strayed into his country like camels without nose-rings, and that they were a nation of unwarlike women, whom he despised.

Algernon Durand was prepared, and advanced immediately across the border to Nilt, a fort that was strongly held by the enemy. Owing to a spur that crossed the track, the guns had to come into action at about 200 yards range and, while the stronghold was being most gallantly stormed by Boisragon, who won the Victoria Cross on this occasion, Algernon Durand was badly wounded.

His elder brother, who heard the news and at one time feared the worst, confided to his diary his intense emotion:

> I do thank God from the bottom of my heart. He was wounded while standing within 200 yards of the fort, and should have been much farther off, as I warned him. But the fighting blood is too strong, as I feared it would be. God bless him, my brave boy, fighting like an Englishman.

The capture of Nilt, a fine feat, was followed by a still finer feat of arms, the precipice leading to Hunza, that was guarded by stone shoots and hundreds of Kanjuti tribesmen, being scaled and stormed by the intrepid Gurkhas under gallant Manners Smith, who also won the Victoria Cross.

As soon as the Hunza warriors realized that their line of sangars was pierced, they submitted, crawling out of them with their mouths filled with straw, in token of their abject humiliation before the victors.

Safdar Ali fled to Chinese Turkistan where he was still living a decade ago when I was Consul-General in that remote land. He had threatened the British with the wrath of three Empires—to wit Hunza, China and Russia. In any case, he was in communication with Tashkent, and the success of the operations may be well expressed in the words of the Russian Foreign Minister: "*Ils nous ont fermé la porte au nez.*"

Durand sums up the whole question as follows :

No one knows better than I do the difficulties of the Gilgit policy. I was in the Foreign Office when Biddulph's Agency was withdrawn, and I had no inclination whatever to push another Agency in without necessity. But it became very evident that, unless we did so, we should lose all control over this tract of country. Russia cannot at present, and perhaps cannot ever, put a considerable force into it, but if we had not forestalled her, she would certainly before now have either raised the turbulent Dard States and expelled the Kashmiris from Gilgit, which a few officers of the Yanoff type could have easily managed, or she would have kept the Kashmiris where they were on sufferance. If the critics of the Gilgit policy will seriously examine the question from this point of view, and think of the consequences of further inaction, I fancy they will find it hard to deny that we acted on the whole for the best. The effect on our frontier and on India, of unknown and exaggerated Russian movements in Chitral and the neighbouring states, and of a Kashmir under Russian influence, would have been far more alarming than our present troubles. We ran some risk, no doubt, but we have let light into all this country, and we have riveted our hold on Kashmir. Continued inaction would have been far more imprudent.

To-day no one questions the wisdom of the steps taken to occupy the Northern Land Gate of India or the complete success that has attended the policy of making British influence supreme on the northern marches of the Indian Empire. The story of this fine achievement is told in detail with characteristic self-effacement by Algernon Durand in "The Making of a Frontier." We have also the weighty evidence of the late Mr. E. F. Knight, author of that classic, "Where Three Empires Meet," who wrote:

> Great loss of life, a fearful sum of human misery, a vast waste of the Kashmir State funds—such was the history of the Gilgit garrison and the Gilgit road up to the inauguration of the wise policy by which the defences of Gilgit have been put into the hands of a British Agency.[1]

In 1891 Durand was asked to take over the command of the Simla Volunteers, a corps which was not in a very satisfactory condition at that period. The fact is that it is difficult to maintain a high state of efficiency in a volunteer force unless enthusiasm permeates it, and Durand, in view of the serious calls on his time and the expense involved, hesitated before accepting the post.

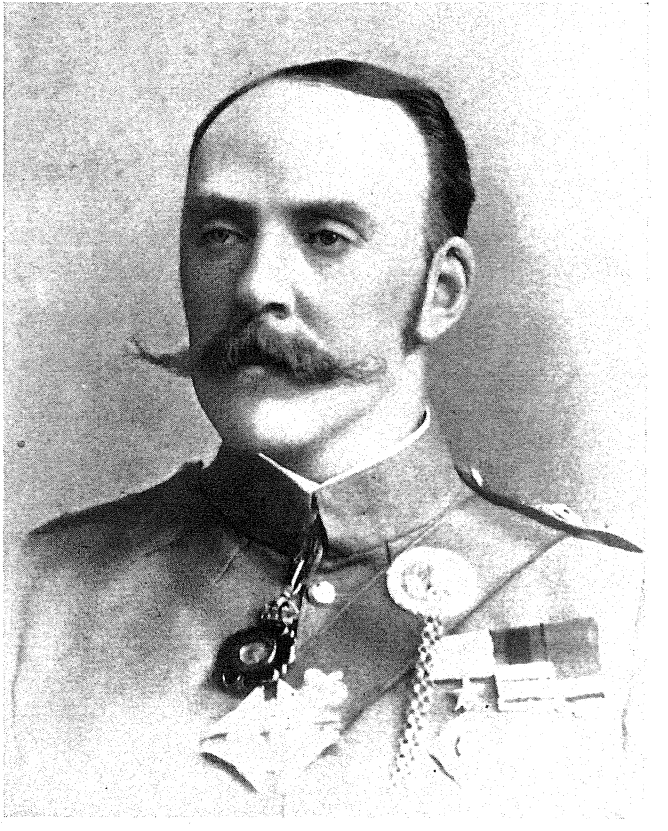
However, he finally did so, and after working hard to learn his drill he took over command in the spring of 1892, when he addressed the regiment, which was only 162 strong on parade, his remarks ending:

> Don't any of you let yourselves regard volunteering as a mere amusement. I want every man in this corps to keep constantly before his eyes the idea that he is training himself to become a useful fighting man in case of need. Unless volunteering is undertaken in that spirit it is worth nothing. I for one would certainly not waste my time in mere playing at soldiers. And don't let anyone persuade you that it is useless, that none but regular troops will be any good when fighting comes. All history contradicts that prejudice. Of course regular troops under trained professional officers must be more efficient than amateurs. Practice is everything.

[1] Page 285.



LADY DURAND.



DURAND AS O.C. SIMLA VOLUNTEERS, 1893.

You can no more make war without practice than you can make boots. But, especially for purposes of defence, which is the main business of volunteers, determined men with rifles in their hands can do a great deal, even if they are not highly drilled troops.

During the period of his command, Durand took his duties seriously, and I recollect seeing his soldier-like figure on parade more than once in the summer of 1893.

In 1891 the Duke of Argyll, who had been Secretary of State for India during the last years that Sir Henry Durand served in India, brought forward the question of granting a baronetcy to Colonel Edward Durand in recognition of his father's eminent services. The fact was that Edward Durand had inherited a considerable fortune and was therefore in a position to support the title if it were granted to him. Needless to say, Mortimer Durand, who cherished his father's memory most faithfully, was delighted at the honour paid to it, and was much gratified when, in the following year, the baronetcy was gazetted. As was perhaps only natural, Sir Edward Durand hastened to sever his connexion with India and settled down to make a home for his family in Shropshire, but sometimes looked back with regret to the days he had spent in the East.

In the autumn of 1891 Durand accompanied the Viceroy to Kashmir, where the Maharaja, Pratab Singh, whose behaviour had previously been unsatisfactory, was partly restored to power by being appointed President of the Council of the State.[1]

We left Srinagar by boat after sixteen days' stay, which I greatly enjoyed; scenery and colouring very beautiful. A cloudless blue sky, against which stood out the purple and brown masses to the north, and the snowy range to the south and east and west. Rocky peaks powdered with snow to north also. Poplars getting very yellow, and the magnificent chinar trees almost crimson. As I walked along the left bank, the mountains and trees with the sunset flush on them were mirrored in the smooth surface of the river.

[1] He was restored to full power in 1921.

From Kashmir, Durand proceeded to Patiala, where the Imperial Service Troops were inspected by Lord Dufferin, as mentioned in the previous chapter. Peshawar was the next centre of the tour, and a visit was paid to the Khaibar Pass to enable its problems to be discussed on the spot. From Peshawar, Durand proceeded to the Black Mountain, where operations were in progress under Major-General Sir William Lockhart. The Black Mountain is described as "a poor thing. Long bare spurs with some forest on top in patches. Roads now clearly visible on face of spurs, zigzagging up." He concluded the tour by riding through the Kohat Pass with Lady Durand. No Foreign Secretary ever displayed such anxiety to study problems on the spot as Durand.

In the following year a visit was paid to Mysore, and Durand accepted an invitation to take part in operations for the capture of a herd of wild elephants. To this expedition we owe another of the delightful letters that he wrote to his little daughter, a facsimile reproduction of which occupies the next few pages.

I first made the acquaintance of Durand in the summer of 1893, upon reaching Simla after making journeys in Central Asia and Persia. He received me in his house, where the staircase was guarded by two magnificent St. Bernards. I was ushered into the room of a man of extraordinarily imposing presence, who greeted me stiffly but kindly, and then waited for me to speak about my experiences, while he listened gravely, occasionally putting a question. At first I felt ill at ease, but gradually I realized that I was talking to a man who appreciated the information that I had collected at some risk, and who possessed a profound knowledge of Central Asian affairs. Then it gradually dawned on me that he was the only man I had met who possessed this knowledge, and finally, that I was in the presence of a great man. This feeling was maintained and strengthened in the next thirty years, during the course of which I served under Durand in Persia, and was honoured by his friendship to the end.

Good night
my blessing
Be good to
Mother.
Sweet dreams
Jack.

Camp. Mysore
Nov. 14. 92

My blessing

I could not write to you yesterday because I was in a carriage all day, and too tired at night to do more than write to Mother.
We are in camp in a big fine jungle of bamboos and trees, near what they call a Kheddah, which is a place where they catch elephants.
They make an enclosure in the jungle - about half as big as

Amandale - by digging a deep ditch and lining the sides with split bamboos to keep them firm and steep.
The enclosure has two huge gates - one at each end - built of trees - and these gates draw up high in the air so that Elephants can pass through.
When the Kheddah men hear of a herd being anywhere near a lot of shikaris go out and get round them and gradually get them towards the Kheddah - which often takes days - When the herd is near the Kheddah

the gate nearest them is left open and in the night the elephants move on and find the ditch in front of them - then they search about for a way of crossing it and find the gate and go through into the kheddah.

Then a man on a high tree near the gate pulls a wire and moves a sort of trigger of iron rail and the gate drops behind the elephants, who are caught in the enclosure.

All night long they try to get out, but there are men all round the outside of the ditch - who light fires and dance about and blow horns and fire guns. and the poor beasts are kept inside.

That was the state of things when we got here last night.

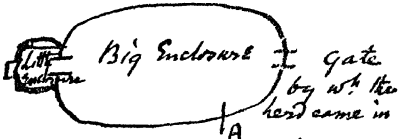
A herd of about 20 elephants some very big, some not much bigger than Jot pony, were in the enclosure among the bamboo clumps. All night the fires were kept up and the herd kept in.

This morning we went to look

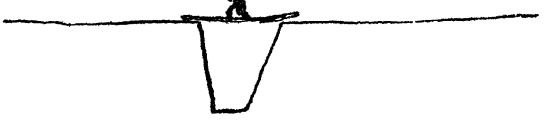
at them and saw them well across the ditch, and one old mother elephant who had a baby with her got very angry, and threw up her trunk and came rushing at the ditch, where Mrs Ravenshaw was, and frightened her very much - She ran like a hare. But the elephant could not cross -

Then the real fun begins - From the big jungle enclosure you have to get the elephants through another gate into a small enclosure made of trees and logs -

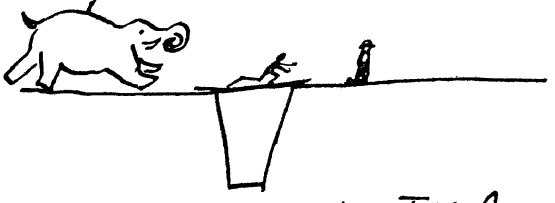
about 20 yards across. ~~not bigger than one side of a tennis court~~ - The gate is all hidden by bamboos and trees, and is on the side of a deep nullah - so that they don't see.



We started this afternoon to drive the elephants from the big enclosure into the little one - The ditch of the big enclosure was crossed by bamboo bridges - strong enough for men - but of course impassable for elephants -



so the men crossed over near the gate by wh the herd came in - and rattled bamboos and fired guns and blew horns and tried to push the herd up to the gate of the little enclosure - I stood at A and watched - The herd broke back several times and charged - one or two of them - and the men came racing back over the bamboo bridge



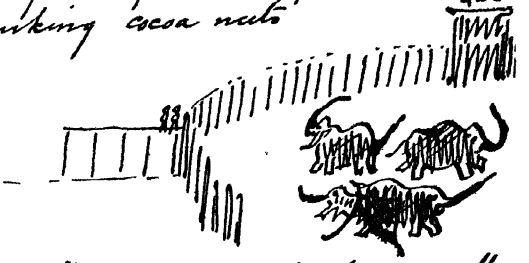
and the elephants stopped - because they cannot jump
I went across once - but I came back rather quick - and nearly slipped on the bamboos - A big elephant trotting at you and trumpeting is rather alarming - They look enormous in the jungle, and your gallant father did not much like them - They have a nasty habit of knocking you down and squashing you with their foot



and you go pop like a soda water bottle. I don't think it is very gentlemanly - or ladylike. and the ladies are the worst.

Well at last we got them to go through the gate into the little enclosure - which is quite bare - a sort of big room - and they huddled together - all trying to get into the middle and pushing and jostling - the little ones were crushed and sometimes knocked down - and cried very much It was rather sad to see them - We were on a bamboo platform over the stockade and looked down on them - Now and then the big ones came and pushed and made the whole thing rock, but we pushed them off with sticks and at last left them - very

angry and tired - I can't draw the herd in the stockade - It is too difficult - but imagine a ring of tree trunks about as big as the tennis ground with twenty elephants inside - all pushing and rushing about - and ourselves looking over and eating oranges and apples and drinking cocoa nuts



only they were much closer - all jammed up together - all trying to squeeze in among the others -

If they had made one rush together the whole thing would have gone like paper - but they never do - Some day by chance they will - and there will be a smash.

Tomorrow some tame elephants will go in with men on them - and the men slip off and slip big nooses round the elephants' legs - and they are tied up - they are kept without food or water until the afternoon, and then they are taken out one by one - each one between two tame beasts and marched down to the river close by - and in a few weeks they are all quite tame and help to catch the next herd - It is wonderful how soon they get tame - Some of those which stood by the side of the road and salaamed to the Viceroy - and are helping to catch this herd - were caught only three months ago - and the big ones are forty or fifty years old - Perhaps they knew the elephants in this herd before I was born -

It is rather sad somehow. They were so free and happy in the jungle - and now they are slaves - bound to do what the mahout tells them -

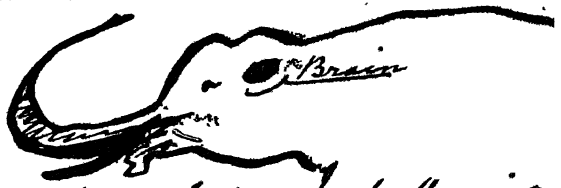
There is one big gentleman

who broke away from the herd and smashed the ditch and stockade and got away. He is what they call a "rogue" - I don't think he is a real rogue - but he roams about at night and is very angry and lonely - with all his family captured - The others keep trumpeting and he answers and tries to join them - I can't hear them now - but I heard them all the evening - though they are a mile and a half away. He broke into the kheddah and broke out again, and the men are very much afraid of him - He has broken one tusk - but

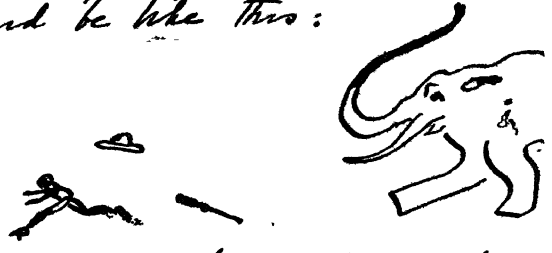
is very big and savage - and they say he must be shot so I am going out to try and kill him -

It is rather ticklish work - You cannot be sure of a shot unless you get within twenty yards of him - because an elephant will take any number of bullets unless you hit him in the brain - which is very small - and you have to stalk him through the bamboo jungle - and sometimes he charges - which is like a railway train coming at you - and you have to dodge like a hare - But

I have a good rifle and think I shall be all right - The brain is like this:



and perhaps I shall miss and be like this:



which will be desagreable -

Goodnight my blessing -

15th We went this morning and saw the elephants tied up. A lot of tame trekkers came in with mahouts on them, and hustled the others who seemed cowed. Gradually the men roped their legs and necks, and then they were taken out one by one, roped to tame elephants, and led down to the river to drink & bathe. Some were quiet enough - Others threw themselves about and did all they could to break the ropes - trumpeting and roaring. It was a curious sight - None of them tried to touch the mahouts - who seemed quite happy and fearless.

CHAPTER XV

RELATIONS WITH THE AMIR

Timur Shah, two days after he was stoned, called out from beneath the heap of stones, "O creature of Allah! Come hither and kill me, so that I may be released from this torment." The Watchman replied, "I cannot slay thee without orders from the Amir."—FROM DURAND'S DIARY.

THE position of Abdur Rahman, after his visit to India, remained one of intense and constant difficulty. He ruled over a united Afghanistan in the sense that his representatives were governors in the chief cities, but the great tribes, whose traditions included the right to raid, and whose motto might well have been "Base is the knave that pays," hated the Amir's efforts to make them obey him and pay taxes. It must be remembered that his justice was merciless—the justice of Europe in the Middle Ages—and that there were very few, if any, of his subjects whom he could trust. Moreover, his health was not good, and his doctors nearly bled him to death on more than one occasion.

The most important tribe in Afghanistan after the Durranis, and of greater fighting strength than they, is that of the Ghilzais who occupy the eastern ranges between Kandahar and Kabul. It was the Ghilzais of Kandahar who invaded Persia and captured Isfahan early in the eighteenth century.[1] This great feat they had not forgotten and they acknowledged the supremacy of the ruling tribe most unwillingly.

As the Amir, quoting from the poet Sadi, put it :

"The reason why the meadow-snake doth bite the shepherd,
Is that the shepherd's hand is the first to break the snake's head."

[1] *Vide* my "History of Persia," Vol. II, 216.

This couplet, in a nutshell, explains the rebellion of the Ghilzais in 1886, their leader being the aged Mashk-i-Alam, who had united his countrymen against the British in the Second Afghan War. His particular grievance was the decision of the Amir to stop the allowances that were paid to mullas, which constituted an intolerable drain on the Kabul treasury. The Ghilzais, when they rebelled, appealed to Queen Victoria to aid them in their struggle for what was really liberty to raid and murder. No notice was taken of this appeal, which was, however, most significant.

At the outset of the campaign the Amir was hard put to it, and competent opinion on the frontier was, if anything, inclined to doubt whether he could crush the rebellion, the gravity of which was increased by a mutiny at Herat. However, his generals finally won after much hard fighting and Timur Shah Ghilzai, who had been one of the Amir's generals and had joined his fellow-tribesmen, was captured and executed by stoning, as described in the heading of this chapter.

Durand writes at this period:

> The Amir is a troublesome and unsatisfactory ally, and there is no doubt he is thoroughly detested throughout the country. His cruelties are horrible, and one feels reluctant to support him in power, especially as he shows the utmost jealousy of ourselves. If it were not for the fact that his fall would throw everything into disorder and give Russia an opening, I should not be sorry to see him driven out of the country.

In Afghanistan the rule is that relations are natural enemies, and this axiom was exemplified once again in the very serious rebellion of Ishak Khan, the Amir's cousin, who was governor of Afghan Turkistan. For some time his conduct had been unsatisfactory, and he had made excuses when summoned to Kabul. In 1888, Abdur Rahman was seriously ill for over a month and a rumour of his death spread far and wide. Ishak Khan, taking advantage of it, claimed the throne and was joined

by the troops and leading men of the province. The Amir's troops met those of the Pretender near Tashkurgan and, after a battle which lasted the entire day, Ishak Khan was defeated.

During the action, one of the Amir's columns was cut up and deserters spread the report in Kabul of the Amir's defeat, which was credited for some time. Curiously enough, Ishak Khan, who was posted on a hill, saw some men galloping towards him, whose purpose was to desert to him, but thinking that they intended to attack him, he fled from the field and thereby lost the day.

A third rebellion was that of the Hazaras, who were of Mongol extraction. They were also members of the Shia division of Islam, and were consequently hostile to the Afghans who were Sunnis. The Hazaras occupied the mountainous heart of Afghanistan and, like the Ghilzais, bitterly resented any curtailment of their liberty to raid. Fortunately for the Amir, in this campaign he was able to arouse the spirit of fanaticism among his subjects. The Hazaras were attacked from all sides, and were finally crushed; they were treated with unspeakable cruelty, the war being almost one of extermination. By these important successes, and by carefully killing off all powerful or ambitious chiefs, Abdur Rahman, although hated, established himself more firmly on the throne, and ruled over a wider realm than any of his immediate predecessors.

And what were the relations of the Amir with the Government of India during this period? They were generally unsatisfactory, partly owing to suspicions and partly because the Amir felt obliged to foster the fanaticism and pride of his people by a policy of pinpricks—if not worse. In May, 1887, Durand wrote:

> The Amir has recently circulated a proclamation, or pamphlet, which warns the Afghans to prepare for an invasion by Kafirs who have twice before overrun the country. It is possible, though I think not probable, that he may have determined to raise a *Jihad* (Holy War) against us as a means of taking the wind out of the sail s

of the Ghilzai rising. The Russians would, no doubt, if they have any influence with him, favour this idea.

I expect the whole thing is merely a dodge—which the Amir will explain away—but the Amir's family are all more or less mad, and he is ill, so there may be something serious in it. Our latest letter from Kabul is I think dated the 10th, and there would have been time since then for Abdur Rahman to proclaim a *Jihad* in Kandahar, and for the news to reach our border.

As a matter of fact, nothing serious followed this rather alarming news, the proclamation being intended entirely for home consumption, as our politicians would put it.

The rebellion of Ishak Khan caused the Amir to adopt a very different tone. In his dire need he begged Lord Dufferin to dispatch troops to support him; and naturally his critical position caused deep anxiety in India. However, when the defeat and flight of the Pretender were certified, the need for British support lessened, and so did the Amir's friendliness.

The first indication that the Amir had suggested a Mission to Kabul is dated October, 1888:

In Afghanistan all went fairly well until lately, and the Amir asked us to send him a Mission. I was selected, or selected myself, and it is still possible that I may go, but the Amir's cousin, Ishak Khan, has been giving trouble for two months and is only just suppressed, and winter is near, besides which we can barely get back before Lord Dufferin goes. It will be a disappointment if I cannot manage it, but I doubt our pulling it off.

Not long afterwards the diary runs:

The Kabul Mission has broken down, the Amir going to Balkh to arrange matters. I believe he was afraid of having us, lest we should ask too much. He was very nearly beaten by Ishak, and in his straits he humbled himself to us, though facing his man. He wished us to occupy Kandahar and Jalalabad.

In January, 1891, Durand writes:

Pyne[1] leaves by this mail bearing a letter to Lord Salisbury, in which the Amir asks to be made independent of the Indian

[1] Mr. (afterwards Sir Salter) Pyne who, from 1885, had been the Amir's chief engineer.

Government. Pyne tells me he regards me as his great enemy now. The fact is that he is madly jealous of his independence, and as arrogant and suspicious as Afghans always are, and a number of mischievous devils see their own advantage in fostering these feelings.

In June, 1891, he continues:

We are getting very bad news all along the border, from the Black Mountain to the Waziri country. The Amir is threatening Kurram; the Afridis are in a very shaky condition, with his emissaries among them giving them ammunition. It is almost certain now that if Lockhart had been checked on the Samana, the Afridis would have joined in, the Khaibar arrangements would have broken up, and an Afghan force would have marched into the Turi country. This sounds almost incredible—I could not believe it at first. But I am afraid there is no doubt of it now.

It is only fair to state that, during this period, the British were steadily advancing. The Khojak range was tunnelled and the railway station built at Chaman pointed unmistakably at Kandahar. The Amir somewhat crudely referred to this portion of the British programme as "running an awl into his navel." Equally crude was the remark of a British navvy: "Well, I don't think that 'ere 'ole was made thro' the 'ill to peep thro'." Farther west, we had given his people notice to quit Chagai. This was about the only area containing water between Nushki and the Helmand, which fact the Amir fully realized. Moreover, there was a scheme afloat for the construction of a railway from Quetta to Sistan, and the Amir thought that it would pass through Chagai. One of his letters to the Viceroy at this period ran: "Where is the frontier line of Afghanistan? Make up your minds and let me know the worst."

In October, 1891, Durand notes:

The Amir is behaving very funnily—not answering us, but making known to us in various indirect ways, his intention of going to England. Very likely he only means to cover a direct agreement to come to India, which he thinks might look like giving in to us, as we rather pressed it in preference to a Mission.

In the spring of 1892, Durand sums up the situation:

The Amir is behaving worse than ever, and I cannot see where it is to end. He has taken Asmar, in spite of our prohibition against meddling with Bajaur. He tells us he is King of the Afridis, and almost admits that he stirred them up against us He does admit that he has let his tribes go at Kurram, where he is in fact waging an unofficial war against our friends the Turis. He is threatening Dir, and the Diris have applied to us for protection. He has advanced into the Gumal and occupied Gul Kach. He has boycotted the Chaman station, and Browne[1] says the revival of ghazi attempts in Baluchistan is due to his direct orders. He treats our envoy as a prisoner. On the north, instead of following our advice, he is pushing forward on to the Pamirs, courting another Panjdeh. And he won't come to meet the Viceroy "like an Indian Chief." *Quousque tandem?*

As to the Amir's relations with Russia at this time we read:

That he detests us I do not doubt, but I can see no evidence of his being in with Russia. I daresay he would go with her in case of war, for he thinks her stronger than England, but it seems to me that his game is at present to maintain his independence and pose as the Padshah of Afghanistan and King of Islam. He will I believe avoid a collision with Russia by every means in his power, but I do not see what he has to gain by playing into her hands now further than is necessary for his own safety.

Shortly afterwards, Abdur Rahman again put forward suggestions for a Mission. On this occasion he asked for "two British officers of high position, such as Members of Council" to be present at a conference to be held at Kabul. In answer to this request, Lord Lansdowne decided to appoint Lord Roberts to be chief of a Mission to Kabul to be escorted by a powerful force of all arms.

It should surely have been realized that, in view of the bitter memories of the Second Afghan War, the Amir would have a deep-rooted objection to receiving the victorious British commander at the head of a force of all arms. Presumably Durand grasped the situation,

[1] Major-General Sir James Browne, Chief Commissioner of Baluchistan.

but, as he would have been appointed failing Roberts, his hands were tied.

In July, Durand writes to Roberts :

> I don't like the idea of your going to Kabul, except as we went last time. In fact I don't altogether like the idea of your going to the Amir. He will, I think, be perfectly civil to you, but it will make him still more conceited. Yet if anything is to be done with him, I am quite sure there is no one in India who could do it anything like as well as you, and I suppose it is desirable to stretch a point on the chance of making friends with him.

The Amir did not accept Lord Lansdowne's proposal with any undue haste. On the contrary, he employed the highest arts of Oriental diplomacy to procrastinate and to convey the impression that the mission of Lord Roberts was unacceptable to him. Consequently the matter was not pressed, although the situation remained as bad as ever.

The *deus ex machina* in this dangerous impasse was Mr. Pyne. His sturdy independence of character, his shrewdness and his loyalty to his employer had strongly attracted the Amir, who consulted him on questions of foreign policy, and finally decided to send him to Calcutta to explain matters. There he stated frankly that His Highness considered Durand to be his personal enemy and that, owing to his hostility, the Government of India was unfriendly and unsympathetic to him. He also pointed to the successive occupation of districts bordering on Afghanistan, formerly in the possession of more or less independent tribes that, to some extent, had looked to Kabul. Full explanations were given to Pyne, who discharged this delicate mission with much good sense and straightforwardness, and explained to the Foreign Office the Amir's point of view in the various problems that were discussed.

Upon his return to Kabul, Pyne assured the Amir that he was completely mistaken as to Durand's feelings towards His Highness and that he was his sincere well-

wisher, and ready to advance his interests. He also hinted that if His Highness objected to receive Lord Roberts at the head of a British force, Durand was prepared to visit Kabul without any escort, relying entirely on the protection of His Highness.

These discussions at Calcutta entirely changed the attitude of the Amir, and fortunately so, for in the spring of 1893, the Russian Government urgently demanded the withdrawal of the Amir from trans-Oxus Roshan and Shignan. It thus became imperative to settle this difficult question, although it was clearly realized that any withdrawal would be particularly unpalatable to the Amir.

The matter was urgent and Lord Lansdowne informed the Amir of the pressing demand of Russia and proposed to send Durand to Kabul as head of a Mission that would entirely depend on His Highness for protection. To this the Amir immediately agreed, couching his acceptance in the most friendly terms.

In June, Durand writes:

> I have been nominated to go to Kabul. I cannot say it is a duty I look forward to with unmixed pleasure, for the Amir is not fond of giving up territory and he is likely to be extremely unpleasant on the subject, as he has already been about the Kushk business. However the thing must be done, and if the Russians do not embroil matters by forcing a collision in Shignan and Roshan before we can induce the Amir to withdraw, which is probably their game, I think I shall be able to persuade him not only to come back behind the Oxus, but to be reasonable about our frontier.

Durand was now placed on special duty to attend to the organization of the important but difficult mission that had been entrusted to him.

CHAPTER XVI

THE KABUL MISSION

Frontiers are the chief anxiety of nearly every Foreign Office in the civilized world, and are the subject of four out of every five political treaties or conventions that are now concluded. . . . Frontier policy is of the first practical importance, and has a more profound effect upon the peace or warfare of nations than any other factor, political or economic.

—LORD CURZON on FRONTIERS.

THE Mission to the Amir of Afghanistan excited intense interest in India and, to a lesser degree, in Great Britain. As was but natural, there were gloomy prognostications that its members would share the fate of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his staff. So far, indeed, did this opinion prevail outside official circles that when a prominent hotel proprietor was invited to act as caterer for the mess, his wife declared that nothing in the world would tempt her to allow her husband to cross the frontier—not even the promise of a C.I.E. !

Actually everything depended on the life of the Amir. Had he been assassinated or died of sickness during the presence of the Mission in the country, there would undoubtedly have been grave risk of attack by an armed mob actuated by fanaticism and greed. On the frontiers of India and in many distant posts, however, British officials are constantly exposed to such risks, and regard them as part of the game, so that the members of the Commission never gave the matter a thought.

Lord Dufferin, who continued to take the keenest interest in questions connected with the frontiers of India, wrote to Durand from Paris :

You can well imagine with what interest I am watching your journey to Kabul. You have a very difficult and delicate mission to fulfil, but if anybody can deal successfully wi h that strange,

strong creature at Kabul, I am sure you will. I do not know which of our new neighbours are behaving the worst, the Russians or the French. Instead of accepting a line drawn due east from Lake Victoria to the Chinese frontier, which was the *quid pro quo* which induced Lord Kimberley and Lord Rosebery to coax the Amir out of his trans-Oxus provinces, the Russians want to deflect the line south to the very mouth of our two Himalayan passes.

The British members of the Mission included Colonel (now Lieut.-General Sir Edmond) Elles, then head of the Intelligence Branch in India ; Captain (now Colonel Sir Henry) McMahon was one of the Political Officers, while Major Fenn was in medical charge of the Mission.

The camp, organized on a befitting scale, included a double set of tents, those for official use, being particularly fine, so that work was carried on under pleasant conditions. On arrival in camp after each march, the members of the Mission found tents pitched and were greeted by that prince of caterers, Mr. Bux who, with a low bow, presented the breakfast menu to Durand.

The Mission left Peshawar in mid-September of 1893. The first camp was pitched at Landi Kotal and, after a day's halt to organize the party in charge of the advance tents, it marched on to the frontier at Landi Khana three miles distant, where it was received with much pomp and circumstance, but with equal friendliness, by gigantic Ghulam Hyder, the Afghan Commander-in-Chief.

Ghulam Hyder wore a light blue frock-coat which showed up his ample figure. He had baggy blue trousers, not adapted for riding, with an English felt helmet. He rode a strong roan waler, whose neck was adorned with a handsomely chased silver collar. The escort are awful ragamuffins ; the cavalry in short red coats and yellow trousers, with rough low boots ; the infantry in loose blue trousers, black coats with red collars and cuffs, and country shoes with upturned points. The headpiece is a yellow conical *kulla*, with a band worn rather at the back of the head.

The march is a delightful change from long hours spent in office, and the Mission is composed of a picked set of officers, thoroughly efficient and always cool and cheery, who were soon on

the best of terms with the soldiers of the escort—a most willing and good-tempered body of men, always ready to climb hills with us or beat for game.

Practically the only drawback was that, on the march, we never could go out of a walk, which was slow work and rather wearying. The Amir, it was said, had warned the Commander-in-Chief that his life was too valuable to be risked; and his great bulk—he must have weighed over twenty stone—certainly made him ill-adapted for fast riding.

Our safety is very well secured. Afghan soldiers are about us at all times. I have, or had last night, one on the front of my tent, one on the rear, and one over the door of the side room in which I sleep. Yesterday evening we went out for a stroll, after asking Ghulam Hyder about it. His answer was that we could ride or walk where we pleased, and that he would have men ready. When we came out, we found a troop of red cavalry and a company of infantry under arms. We got rid of the cavalry, but the captain commanding the infantry, a nice young fellow, insisted on taking all his men with us. Part of them spread out in skirmishing order in front of us, and everyone we came across was forced away round one of our flanks, 200 yards off. It is the same with everything.

The General is always most friendly. To-day we talked about the size of London, and how it was supplied with food; about the nations of Europe and the Triple Alliance, as to which his view was that we were in a splendid position, since we could always hold aloof until we saw how things were going, and then come in and join the winning side; about religious prejudices, the hatred of Sunnis and Shias, the Reformation and the Inquisition, the Mussulman and Christian stories of Christ's life and death, the Spanish Armada, Napoleon and his wars, about which Ghulam Hyder knew a good deal, the manners of the Somalis, tiger-shooting, and various other things. He really is a very interesting companion. He looks with longing eyes on Persia, and says it would be very delightful if the Afghans could be allowed to attack Persia or Bokhara, but of course it is impossible.

The only town that lay on the line of march was Jalalabad, with its memories of the First Afghan War.

We marched in this morning, and are most luxuriously accommodated in the Amir's new palace—a fine square white building, with a domed centre room, surrounded by a walled garden, in which

are tanks and fountains, and even a Turkish bath, which they have heated up for us. My windows look across the plain into the mouth of the Kunar valley, which is green and well wooded, with low hills on each side. The weather is only pleasantly warm, and the breeze comes through the windows across a large tank, in the centre of which is a murmuring fountain. I find it rather difficult to keep awake. The sentry in front of my tent finds the sun hot. He has slung his rifle over his shoulder, bayonet upwards, and has opened a big black umbrella. He is quite as likely as not to be there all day, poor fellow, with no relief but an occasional slice of water melon brought him by a friend.

We are going this evening to visit the town. How Sale ever allowed himself to be shut up with a whole brigade in this place, with beautiful flat fighting ground all round him, passes my comprehension. Jalalabad is a dirty little place, surrounded by dead donkeys and camels, whose "essences make the live air sick."

As the Mission was approaching Kabul, Mr. Pyne arrived in camp.

Judging from what I see on the march, Pyne has gained a remarkable position in Afghanistan. Ghulam Hyder and other officials treat him with the greatest deference, and he evidently is believed to have the Amir at his back. The more I have to do with him, the more respect I feel for his sagacity.

We had a stormy march through the Jagdallak Pass, and camped near trees south of our old position. I climbed to the old crag picket in the evening and made out exactly where I missed the passage of the stream in the snow, in 1880, and wandered off into the darkness with my old Jat sowar. It was all quite clear to-day and I thought I recognized the exact fold in the hill-side where I clambered up on hands and knees, pulling my horse behind me.

Near our camp at Lataband was rather a ghastly illustration of the Amir's methods. On a post by the roadside there was an iron cage with some bones in it. These were the remains of a noted highwayman, who was caught and left in the cage to die. They say he lingered without food or water for sixteen days.

The official entry into Kabul was made on October 2 :

We could not have been treated with greater honour. At the bridge over the Logar River, the reception began with a force of mounted troops, which saluted us and then joined our escort.

Soon afterwards, we met the carriages of the Amir, and drove to Indiki by the north of the city, passing Baber's tomb on the left, with the Amir's new "Ark" on the right. It was a great reception, a salute of twenty-one guns being fired, bands playing "God Save the Queen," and fanfares of trumpets being sounded at every corner.

Messages of welcome from the Amir were couched in most friendly terms, and there was evidence of a strong desire to please us. A rather embarrassing feature in the reception was the arrival of thirty thousand Kabuli[1] rupees in bags, with a list showing how much was for each of us. This was to meet our travelling expenses. I took over the money, and the Amir doubtless thinks we shall keep it.

We are in a house, built on a high mound near the western foot of the Kabul range. My room is semi-circular, forming the end of the house. Its five windows look out upon the whole of the Chardeh Valley. The flat ground is now cultivated, and the poplar and other trees have increased to such an extent that it looks from here as if there were an almost uninterrupted wood. This was where we had some hard fighting in December, 1879, and I have often longed to see the country again.

On the day after the arrival at Kabul, Durand writes:

There was a troublesome contretemps to-day. After assuring me last night there was no objection to our having a ride in the morning, Ghulam Hyder stopped us as we were ready to mount, and then objected to our going out for a stroll. So we are practically prisoners in the garden. This we found was by the order of the Amir, who objects to our being seen until he has received us.[2]

The reception by the Amir was most satisfactory.

He really seemed very well, much better than in 1885, though thinner. But the great change is in his manner. I looked in vain for my old acquaintance of 1885, with his burly figure and Henry the Eighth face and ready scowl. I suppose the scowl is ready still

[1] A Kabuli rupee is worth about one half an Indian rupee.

[2] According to Persian procedure (which guided the Amir), the Mission was allowed three days in which to recover from the fatigue of the journey, during which period its members were expected to rest and to prepare for their official reception by His Highness. There was no unfriendly intention in the mind of the Amir.

when wanted, but the Amir of to-day is a quiet gentlemanly man; his manner and voice so softened and refined that I could hardly believe that it was really Abdur Rahman. I trust all his extreme pleasantness does not mean a proportionately stiff back in business matters.

Habibulla[1] is a rather fat, smooth-faced youth, with fairly pleasant manners. I have not seen enough of him to form an opinion of his character. He wore a scarlet coat with the G.C.S.I. ribbon, but without the cross or badge.

The Amir was most cordial to me personally, repeating that I was an old friend, and that he felt, now I had been sent here, all would go well. He held my hand so long, and was so very affectionate, that I began to feel quite uncomfortable.

The coachman of my state carriage, the Amir's own, was a slight flaw in the proceedings. He wore a very old brown "pot" hat, and was late when we came out from the interview, whereupon the Commander-in-Chief told him he had become a bullock, also that he was an ass, and, finally, that he was quite unfit to drive me, being only a "dead thing." This last insult stung him to the quick, and he implored Ghulam Hyder to take back the word. "Have I served the Amir for eight years," he said, "to be called a dead thing?" But the *Sipah Salar* would not withdraw it, and the man went away sorrowful.

Pyne represents the Amir as thinking of almost nothing but guns. He refused not long ago to look at the moon through a big telescope someone had sent here. To use Pyne's language, he said, "Oh blow the moon. What's the use of the moon to me? Can't you make a gun of it?"

His Highness shows constant civility in small ways, sending over baskets of apricots from Paghman, cucumbers from Kandahar, and other things, at all hours of the day He sent me his own barber the day I arrived: an awful old ruffian, who looked as if he would cut one's throat for sixpence. Fortunately I had already shaved, and I handed him over to Fenn.

At this point it seems desirable to indicate the objects of the Mission. The primary duty of Durand was to inform the Amir that the Russian Government insisted on the literal fulfilment of the Agreement of 1873, which defined the north-eastern limits of Afghanistan. The

[1] Habibulla succeeded his father and faithfully stood by us in the Great War.

terms of this Agreement involved the withdrawal of the Amir from trans-Oxus Roshan and Shignan, but included the acquisition by the Amir of cis-Oxus Darwaz, then in the possession of Bokhara.

In the second place, the questions at issue between the Amir and the Government of India had been the cause of much ill-feeling and suspicion on the part of His Highness. A signal example that has already been referred to, was the tunnelling of the Khojak range, and the extension of the railway to New Chaman. So strongly did His Highness feel on this question that none of his subjects dared to use the new railway station but, as before the construction of the line, carried their goods over the Khojak range on camels, thus totally ignoring its existence. The Amir had shown deep hostility and jealousy to the British maintaining direct relations with the independent tribes lying between India and Afghanistan, more especially the Waziris, the Afridis and the peoples of Bajaur and Swat. His officials had also committed acts of aggression against the Turis in the Kurram Valley. Durand's instructions were to endeavour to change this hostility into a friendly attitude by assurances that our interests and those of His Highness were identical, and that Russia alone would gain by lack of co-operation between India and Afghanistan.

Durand was empowered to make considerable concessions to the Amir to secure the success of these negotiations. It was acknowledged by the British Government that the announcement to the Amir that he could not be supported in the occupation of trans-Oxus Roshan and Shignan would be very unpalatable. To secure the retirement of the Afghans from these provinces was the main object of the Mission, although the question of the North-West Frontier of India was of first-rate importance.

Within a few days of the arrival of the Mission, negotiations with the Amir commenced, the meetings taking place in a garden-house, where the Amir took good care to place Durand facing the light, while he was equally careful to turn his own back to it. He also arranged for

every word spoken to be written by a secretary, who was concealed.

Durand opened the proceedings by referring to the delicate question of the trans-Oxus provinces, which Russia was claiming on behalf of Bokhara. While the Mission was on the march to Kabul, the Amir informed Durand that a body of Russian troops, reported to be two hundred strong under a Captain Vannofski, had entered Roshan with instructions from the General Officer Commanding in Turkistan, to march through the province by a certain route.

It seemed to Durand that the Russians had undertaken this provocative action in the hope of setting the Amir against the Mission. His Highness was, at first, according to Pyne, "sick with anxiety," but, upon hearing from Durand who, in a soothing letter, advised him to allow the intruders to pass, he was much relieved and issued the necessary orders to this effect. In the meanwhile, however, the Afghan officials had broken down a wooden gallery built into the cliff that was the only route; and the upshot was that a few shots were fired without any casualties being inflicted, and Vannofski closed the incident by returning to Pamirski Post, using another route.

To resume:

Although the Amir did most of the talking, by the exercise of patience, I managed gradually to bring in the whole situation as regards Roshan and Shignan, and, though he accused us of always making him go back before the Russians, it was said quite good-humouredly. He seemed much more interested in the British frontier than in the Russian, which was perhaps mere acting But, on the whole, I was extremely pleased with the interview. At the end he said to me quietly, but so that anyone could hear—"We must finish this business first, as you have begun with it, but really the other frontier is the important one. This is a matter between you and me and the Russians. My people will not care, or know, whether I go backwards or forwards in Roshan or Shignan, but they care very much to know exactly how they stand on your side."

My impression is that he will give way about the Agreement

of 1873, and push us rather the harder on our side, but I am by no means confident. His line was that Shir Ali was a fool, and did not know what he was doing He may stand on this, though it is a poor argument.

Some days later :

I feel pretty sure the Amir will not back out of his expressed agreement to withdraw on our advice from trans-Oxus Roshan and Shignan, but he will not hold Eastern Wakhan. He says he had a hand cut off at Somatash the other day, and he is not going to stretch out a long arm along the Hindu Kush to have that shorn off also.

The attitude of the Amir on the question of Wakhan was entirely reasonable. In the interests of British policy, it was desirable to keep a strip of Afghan territory between the British and Russian Empires, the idea being that frontier incidents under such conditions would have less importance than if the outposts were held by British and Russian troops respectively. The Amir had stationed a patrol at Somatash on the Alichur Pamir, a little to the north of Wakhan, which had been most wantonly attacked and cut up by a body of Russian Cossacks, and he realized that he was powerless to retaliate. Wakhan, aptly described as " a long arm," is indefensible from the military point of view, being only ten miles wide at one point and never more than a day's march at any point. The Amir was consequently rendering an important service to the British by accepting the suzerainty of Wakhan—and he fully realized the fact. Durand, on his side, deserved much credit for being able finally to persuade the Amir to reconsider his refusal and to accept the British point of view.

The negotiations proceeded, an important entry running :

We are in complete accord about the northern frontier. His view now is that cis-Oxus Darwaz, which he receives in exchange, is really worth more than trans-Oxus Shignan and Roshan, and that he has done the Russians. As a matter of fact Vannofski's action has been a great help to us, as I pointed out to the Amir the danger of such incidents.

A day or two later :

I cannot help a sort of feeling of pity for the Amir—standing there fighting his game out against Russia and England—absolutely alone Of course it is largely his own fault that he is alone, but there is something rather touching about it. I wish he were not so suspicious, and that he would get me to come over and explain things instead of writing letters. Alone with him I am sure I could convince him, but he seems afraid of my coming informally.

On the other hand his treatment of his officials was hardly calculated to make them devoted to him.

The Commander-in-Chief, besides being a useful soldier, is in fact Governor of all the eastern districts and takes precedence of every one in Afghanistan ; but he is pitiably afraid of the Amir, who humiliates him freely in durbar, and treats him and his opinions with the greatest contempt. He is kept waiting in the cold outside the Amir's house for hours together, in full sight of the Amir, or told to get up and stand in front of the window to keep off an inconvenient ray of sunlight. Only a few days ago, the Amir in his playful way sent some soldiers to raise sixty thousand rupees from him and just now he is rather depressed in consequence.

Durand had persuaded the Amir to withdraw from his provinces across the Oxus and had thereby been successful in the main object of his Mission. He had now to deal with the knotty problems of the North-West Frontier of India ; and here the Amir was by no means so complaisant.

He began by stating that he wanted to have a wall round his country, so that he might know exactly where he was. He also made considerable capital of his ready acquiescence to accept the views of the British Government in the north. Moreover, he imagined that his political and geographical knowledge of the subject was perfect and declined to accept maps or statements that were not in accordance with his views.

Durand found that it was better to forgo reasoned arguments, and to bring His Highness round by indirect means to the point, while avoiding most carefully anything that would irritate a man who had been accustomed for

many years to tyrannize over the wills of his people. Throughout, he was much helped by Pyne, who was frequently able to put matters to the Amir in an acceptable manner and to persuade him to agree to the views held by the British.

Durand realized that the Afghans from time immemorial had lived by raiding or conquering their neighbours and that, by this Agreement, the boundaries to the north, to the south-east and to the south were irrevocably fixed; while the boundary with Persia to the west had also, with the exception of a desert area, been delimitated.

No Amir had maintained his army entirely at the expense of his subjects, and there was danger that when there was no fighting and looting abroad, there would be civil war at home; by the boundary that was being negotiated only Kafiristan would be left to be subdued by the Amir—and Kafiristan was a miserably poor country, although the conquest of a pagan land would gratify his fanatical subjects. It was therefore just and reasonable that the Amir should be given a generous subsidy, if only to lessen the need for imposing crushing taxation on his subjects, and to enable him to maintain a standing army, on which to base his power.

On October 24, the entry runs:

I sat with the Amir to-day from 11 till near 4 o'clock. For the first hour and a half he related to us his experience of the Russians, how they had humiliated and ill-treated him, and how he had gone away at last openly telling them all friendship was at an end between him and them.

Then he began business, but it was evident from the first that he had no intention of really coming to terms. He raised all sorts of irrelevant issues, and orated at great length about the feelings of his people, about the eyes of the Russians and Persians and others being on us to see whether he was going to be disgraced, and so on. He insisted upon my telling him how he was to persuade the Afghans that they must submit to what they so bitterly resented—the boring of the Khojak and the establishment of the Chaman station on the sacred soil of their country. He also announced his undying resolve never to surrender Asmar, the gate of Afghanistan. He

invited me, as the trusted Vizier of the Indian Government, to imitate his promptness in the matter of the Oxus frontier, and to settle our present business straight off by giving him all he asked. In fact he was troublesome in the extreme.

I am bound to say that he was not rude or ill-tempered, and towards the end particularly he was very friendly and laughed a good deal, when I told him I was sure he was a true friend, but that I thought it was a little rough to come one hundred miles into our country and take Chagai, and then heap reproaches on my head besides.

We parted on the best of terms, the Amir holding my hand for a long time, and telling me how important this business was, and assuring me I had not wearied him. But nothing was really decided. Pyne told me beforehand nothing would be. He says the Amir never gives any real decision except on Sundays.

A few days later, when negotiating about Waziristan, of which hilly country the Amir insisted on retaining a slice, Durand writes :

The way the Amir looks at the question was illustrated by one of his answers to me on Sunday. I said to him, "After all, Amir Sahib, if there is so little population and wealth in the country you describe, what good will it do you ?" His answer was one word. He turned upon me, as he does when he is making a point, slowly, with a very steady look into my eyes, and said : "*Nám*"—name—honour.

The Waziri question was the last and the most difficult to be settled. With reference to the discussions Durand wrote :

The Amir wastes time in lengthy stories and dissertations, but on the whole, I am satisfied with the way things have gone. In any case I hope to have persuaded him of our friendly feeling towards him. He told me squarely the other day "I would fight you if you drove me to it. I am not a coward, and I would fight, though I know what the result would be. I have not forgotten Shir Ali, but I would not give up my independence without a fight for my honour. But remember what I say. Unless you drive me into enmity, I am your friend for my life. And why ? The Russians want to attack India. You do not want to attack Russian Turkistan. Therefore the Russians want to come through my country and you

do not. People say I would join with them to attack you. If I did and they won, would they leave my country? Never. I should be their slave and I *hate* them. You would know what it is to hate, if you had been an exile among them—humiliated every day."

The Amir was really anxious for a settlement. His retention of the district of Asmar and of the Waziri district of Birmal, together with the increase of his subsidy by six lakhs of rupees to eighteen lakhs a year, were finally accepted in return for a withdrawal of all claims to suzerainty over the frontier tribes from Chitral to the Persian border; he also accepted the position at New Chaman and agreed to retire from Chagai. Finally he consented to maintain a nominal Afghan suzerainty in Eastern Wakhan, but rightly declined to hold this narrow strip of country with troops.

These negotiations, constituting the most important chapter in the foreign policy of the British in Central Asia, were thus brought to a successful termination in the remarkably short period of four weeks, the Agreement being signed on November 12, 1893. After the signature of the documents, the Amir held a great durbar, which was attended by four hundred leading sirdars:

He made a really first-class speech, beginning "Confidence begets confidence. Trusting his safety and that of his Mission to my care, I have protected him." He then urged his people to be true friends to us and to make their children the same. He said that we did them nothing but good and had no designs on their country. Altogether, he was as straightforward and friendly as possible. After each period of his speech, there were shouts of "Approved! Approved!" On this occasion he was a great orator.

Then I had to reply, which he refused to let me do through an interpreter, and I had to stand up and speak in Persian. However, I got through all right. He was extremely civil about me, and said to the durbar that he was very glad the Viceroy sent me, for three reasons. Firstly, I was in the confidence of the Government and knew all about the business; secondly, I could speak Persian well "though not perfectly"; thirdly, I was sincere and always spoke the truth!

Before the departure of the Mission, the Amir sent Durand a gold star, with medals for the staff. He had already given him a grey squirrel rug, "off my own bed to keep my friend warm," and two bowls of celadon that were believed to break, if poisoned food was placed in them.

He finally sent a message expressing his *khidmat* or "service" to the Queen, greetings to "his friend" Lord Salisbury, to Mr. Gladstone, if I saw him, and lastly to Lord Dufferin.

The Mission then left and, on its way back to India, received a gracious message from Her Majesty, warmly congratulating Lord Lansdowne on the great success of the Mission. Messages from the Secretary of State and from Lord Lansdowne were also received conveying warm appreciation and congratulations. Durand and his staff were given a great reception upon reaching India.

It now remains to give some estimate of the results of Durand's work. For several years, in spite of the serious Russian menace, the Amir, from a variety of causes, had been hostile to the British and, in case of war with Russia, his support, if given, would have been half-hearted and ineffectual. Durand, who had studied the Central Asian question together with the personality of the Amir, used his influence with infinite persistency, caution and patience to secure a northern boundary for Afghanistan that would constitute a definite barrier to Russia's further advance towards India. Under Sir West Ridgeway, this boundary had been demarcated from the Persian frontier as far east as the great bend of the Oxus, by the Afghan Boundary Commission ; and it was now completed by the Mission to Kabul.

Of secondary, but yet of first-rate importance was the definite settlement of the boundary of the North-West Frontier of India, which was also the culmination of many years of deep study and of personal investigation by Durand. Consequently, a brief sketch of the "Durand Line," as it will be known for generations to come, may be of interest.

I would preface this account by pointing out that the powerful and practically independent tribes affected by the Agreement with the Amir lived, like the Highlanders of Scotland, by raiding the lowlands, partly because their stony valleys did not produce sufficient food for their support, and also because, like mountaineers all over the world, they despised the softer dwellers on the plains, whose wealth they envied and desired to share. They were, moreover, mainly Pathans by race and, in case of need, could count on a secure refuge in Afghanistan, and even support against the British.

They were thus hostile to the delimitation of the boundary between India and Afghanistan, since they realized that it meant interference with their predatory habits and feared that it would ultimately end in annexation. Not that this step was intended by Durand, who did not propose to move forward the administrative border of India, and merely wished for political control. This policy has now stood the test of more than thirty years, and the tribes have retained their independence.

There were exceptions to the above generalizations. For example, the Turis of the Kurram Valley, who were referred to in the previous chapter, are members of the Shia division of Islam, and were saved from almost total extinction by British protection. In other sections, too, there were weak tribes, who rejoiced at the law and order that would accompany the British flag.

To commence our survey at the northern end, the boundary starts at the Mintaka and Kilik Passes, referred to by Lord Dufferin at the beginning of this chapter. In this area, the fine work of Algernon Durand, directed and supported by Mortimer Durand, has already been described in Chapter XIV. At first the boundary runs west for some distance, skirting the district of Wakhan which, as already mentioned, the Amir had reluctantly agreed to hold in the interests of British policy.

When the line trended southwards, the position was very different, since the Amir was aware that we had only

very recently asserted claims to the districts of Dir and Bajaur. He was also fully aware that the inhabitants were Pathans and he was naturally most unwilling to surrender his claims to them. Fortunately for the British, the rich district of Asmar, situated only a few stages up the Kunar River above Jalalabad, was of far greater importance to the Amir and, by agreeing to his ownership of this coveted valley, he accepted the loss, as he put it, of Dir and Bajaur.

In 1895, the actual boundary was delimitated by a joint British-Afghan Commission to a peak on the watershed between the Kunar and Panjkora Rivers. Of this Commission, an interesting account is given by Sir Thomas Holdich.[1] Owing to disturbances in Chitral, which were probably encouraged by the Afghan Commissioner and culminated in the siege of the British Agent in the Chitral Fort, the boundary through the Mohmand country to the Khaibar Pass was never demarcated, and remains to-day a cause of trouble on a small scale.

The celebrated Khaibar Pass, the chief land gate of the North-West Frontier, is inhabited by warlike Afridis, some of whom serve as *Khassadars*, or "local levies," and keep the pass open. It is a land of vendettas, but the rule that the road is "out of bounds" for blood feuds is generally observed, and perhaps the wonderful capacity of the British officer for influencing warlike, fanatical tribesmen is seen at its best in the system prevailing in the Khaibar Pass. In November, 1925, a railway was opened, which runs from the main Indian system up the Khaibar to the frontier at Landi Khana. From the point of view of Indian defence, this railway, supplemented by a good double motor road, is as important as the line which ends at New Chaman. It will also undoubtedly prove to be a potent instrument of civilization.

To continue our survey, south of the Khaibar the boundary traverses mountainous country inhabited by

[1] His work, "The Indian Borderland," is a classic for students of the frontiers of India and Afghanistan.

fierce sections of the Afridi tribe, who attacked us in 1897 and, in consequence, the "curtain" of Tirah was raised for the first time and its valleys were penetrated from end to end by British troops.

The line runs due west in this section along the watershed of the lofty Safed Kuh to the dominating peak of Sika Ram, and thence to the Paiwar Kotal at the head of the Kurram Valley, the site of the greatest of the victories gained by Lord Roberts.

From this important land gate, the boundary trends approximately south, although bulging eastwards opposite Ghazni. It then turns south-west and reaches the Tochi Valley, down which runs a caravan route from Ghazni to the plains of India.

The area inhabited by the Waziri tribe is now reached. As mentioned previously, the Amir felt that his honour was involved in retaining a slice of Waziri country, which some of his subjects visited with their flocks during the summer months. Durand, albeit somewhat unwillingly, agreed to run the boundary in such a manner that the district of Birmal was allotted to Afghanistan and thereby settled one of the most knotty points of the negotiations.

The Waziris are a truculent tribe, and when, in 1894, it was decided to form a military post at Wana, which was of great strategical importance as constituting the key to their "back door," and absolutely commanded the important caravan route from Ghazni down the Gumal Valley to the plains of India, they fought desperately for their independence, but were beaten. Durand, in a letter, made the following comment on the section from the Khaibar to the Gumal:

> It is satisfactory that just where the tribes are strongest—Afridi and Waziri country—the strip is very narrow. The tribes are brave enough no doubt, and the country is difficult, but the power of the rupee and of roads and railways is very great.

South of the Gumal the boundary enters the Baluchistan province and runs west along the northern watershed of

the Zhob Valley for some distance. It then turns south to New Chaman.

The land of mountain valleys with their rushing torrents has now been left behind, and the boundary runs approximately west, parallel to the historical Helmand River, and passing through an arid desert. The disputed water supply at Chagai was left well on the British side of the line, and this frontier, aggregating some 1,200 miles, ended at Kuh-i-Malik-Siah, a conspicuous hill situated on the Persian frontier.

To conclude this summary, I quote again from Curzon's lecture on "Frontiers."

> It has been by a policy of Protectorates that the Indian Empire has for more than a century pursued and is still pursuing its, as yet, unexhausted advance. . . . The culminating point of this policy on the western side was the signature of the Durand Agreement at Kabul in 1893, by which a line was drawn between the tribes under British and those under Afghan influence for the entire distance from Chitral to Sistan, and the Indian Empire acquired what, so long as Afghanistan retains an independent existence, is likely to remain the Frontier of active responsibility.

It remains to add a few words about the change for the better in the feelings of the Amir towards the British. More than a century ago, Sir John Malcolm told the members of his staff that Persians read men and not books. The Amir also read men and not books and, of set purpose, moved slowly upon the arrival of the Mission, in order to study Durand and his staff, whose acts and demeanour were reported to him by his officials and spies. He also formed his own conclusions during the many hours that were spent in the negotiations.

Durand often told me that the Amir was the strongest man with whom he had had to deal in his long and varied career. This meant that two strong men met, who first respected and then liked one another, with the result that the Amir, after due cogitation, came to the conclusion that Durand spoke the truth and that the British were his true friends. He consequently decided to agree to the wishes

of the British Government, although he cordially disliked many of their demands. The importance of the Amir's decision was far reaching, and it undoubtedly kept his successor, Habibulla, loyal to the British during the Great War.

For the Indian Empire this successful Mission constituted the most important achievement of external policy during the nineteenth century. Not only did it stop the further advance of Russia towards India, but it removed a constant source of misunderstanding and irritation with that Power. Moreover, it paved the way for the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907, which improved the relations of the two Powers to such an extent that their co-operation in the Great War was thereby materially facilitated.

Of the services rendered to the State by Durand, the great maker of boundaries and thereby the great peace-maker, it is difficult to speak too highly. The *Spectator*, which referred to him as " the strongest man in the Empire," did not praise him too highly, and there were other notices of the most complimentary kind in the Press. The Mission to the Amir was his grand climacteric of honour and success, while the three decades that have elapsed only prove with what statesmanlike sagacity and foresight this great British official settled the frontiers of the Indian Empire and of Afghanistan.

CHAPTER XVII

AT THE COURT OF PERSIA

Without the garden's towered wall
The sun beats white on sand and stone,
The fiery noon has silenced all,
All but the dust wind's angry moan.

Within, the murmuring waters flow
Through rose and iris, dim with shade,
And planes and poplars whisper low
In many a leafy colonnade.—From Verses by DURAND.

SHORTLY after the return of the Kabul Mission, Lord Lansdowne left India and was succeeded by Lord Elgin, who assumed charge in January, 1894. Durand deeply regretted the departure of both Lord and Lady Lansdowne and his last comment on the departing Viceroy ran : " His motto is his character—*Virtute non verbis.*"

Durand took leave in the spring of 1894, and was well received at home. But the reward bestowed upon him for his eminent services was most inadequate. To institute a comparison, Sir Peter Lumsden, who had been Chief Commissioner of the Afghan Boundary Commission for the first few months of its existence, received the G.C.B., whereas Durand received the same decoration that was given to Lumsden's second-in-command, viz. the K.C.S.I. He once told me with some bitterness that he had heard Mr. Gladstone considered this to be good enough for an Indian official.

Naturally he was depressed at this lack of official appreciation, and was not looking forward with particular pleasure to posting up Lord Elgin in the many complicated problems with which he would have to deal. It must also be remembered that the Foreign Secretaryship, although

certainly one of the most important, is not one of the highest posts in India and is frequently a stepping-stone to charge of a province. In view of the importance of the problems that have to be dealt with, problems that demand the study of an official life-time, the post should certainly rank with the highest.

For these reasons, Durand was seriously considering an application for a chief commissionership, which would give him less work and also allow him to put something by for his children. In spite of the high salary he had drawn for many years, he had failed to save anything.

While he was in this mood, Lord Rosebery unexpectedly offered him the post of Minister Plenipotentiary at Tehran. It is curious to note the advice he received as to accepting the offer. Lord Roberts pointed out that he was the only man who really understood the problems of Central Asia and Afghanistan, as also the character of the Amir, and expressed his fear that if he resigned the Foreign Secretaryship, the Amir would change his friendly attitude. On the other hand Curzon hailed the appointment with delight as that of one "who realized the transcendent importance of Anglo-Indian interests in Persia and of their reaction upon the Indian Empire."

Durand gratefully accepted Lord Rosebery's offer, thereby bringing to a close his career in the Indian Civil Service. Lord Elgin's farewell ran as follows:

> You entered the Foreign Department Secretariat twenty years ago; and have almost uninterruptedly served in the same office with conspicuous merit and great distinction, occupying in quick succession all grades up to the highest, to which you attained nine years ago. You have, however, been more than once employed, for a time, outside this office; and your distinguished service on the occasion of your mission to Kabul last year was not the first which you had rendered to your country in Afghanistan, where you served as Political Officer in the field with credit in the years 1879 and 1880.
>
> Besides the protracted and critical negotiations, which have resulted in the settlement of the boundary and improved relations with Afghanistan, you have had to deal with many matters of the highest importance, among which may be mentioned the settlement

of the boundary between Afghan Turkistan and the Russian dominions, coupled with the negotiations conducted with the Amir on the occasion of His Highness's visit to India in 1885 ; the conquest, annexation and consolidation of the administration of Upper Burma ; the altered relations of the Government of India with Kashmir ; the re-constitution of the Gilgit Agency and extension of political influence in Chitral, Hunza and Nagar ; the negotiations with China relative to the Sikkim frontier ; the institution of a British protectorate on the Somali Coast and improvement of British relations with the tribes round Aden ; the negotiations relating to the boundary of Burma with Siam and China ; and the association of Native States in India with the British Government in furnishing troops for the defence of the Empire.

The comment of *The Times* on this generous tribute ran :

Lord Elgin records a series of public services rarely equalled, and never excelled, during the first twenty years of a modern Indian career. The narrative is one more proof, and a most striking one, that young Englishmen may still win their way to fame and fortune in that country while the blood runs strong in their veins.

The Durands spent the summer in England and, in the autumn of 1894, started for Tehran, spending a few days at Constantinople and Tiflis, which latter city Durand compared to Kabul.

Embarking at Baku, the new Minister reached Persian soil at Enzali. The official reception is described :

Started after breakfast for Rasht, two hours up river in Shah's yacht, then half an hour in flat-bottomed row boats, a rather ridiculous performance ; full diplomatic uniform and a sluggish stream where we were rowed or towed along muddy banks to a small and very dirty landing-place. Tea and sweets and then five miles in carriages to Rasht. The sowars would have shamed a small Native State in India. Three sowars with led horses, some with tails knotted up and all bad. A few more sowars with carbines, also a dozen or so of infantrymen, ragged and dirty beyond words, also a dozen men in Persian frock-coats unarmed, or bearing guns in yellow and red covers, and finally four red *shatirs* or " runners," and one in blue.

The officer commanding the infantry escort drew his sword and wanted to walk by our carriage, but the blue *shatir* hit him over the head twice and he went away crying, drawn sword in hand. Red *shatirs* made raids on harmless boys. So we proceeded through the narrow filthy streets until we reached the house placed at our disposal.

The appalling state of the mule track, the dirty rest-houses and the official reception upon arrival at Tehran were all caustically commented on, and, with a sigh of relief, Durand was left free to settle into the Legation—a task which sorely taxed Lady Durand, as the furniture and carpets were worn out, and the servants hopelessly inefficient.

The account of the curious reception by Shah Nasir-u-Din runs :

On arrival at the Palace door, inside the enclosure, we took off the goloshes we were all wearing, I having found a pair of Sir Frank Lascelles', and went up into the Shah's presence. He received us at the end of a long room, up which we all advanced bowing, and I handed him my letter of credence and made him a little speech. He is a man of considerable presence and dignity, and was covered with jewels, wearing round his neck a medallion of the Queen set in diamonds. He received me courteously, but did not shake hands. After some conversation about the journey, etc., we parted, I and staff backing down the hall and bowing. We kept on our hats all the time. Then I visited Sadr-i-Azam (Prime Minister), a very pleasant-mannered man and still young.

It may be well to explain that, after long negotiations, conducted many years previously, during which the Persian Government stood out for the removal of his boots by the Envoy, goloshes were accepted as a compromise by both parties. The hat is kept on in Persia, as its removal would be regarded as showing a lack of respect.

Towards the close of the nineteenth century the state of Persia was one of continuous decadence. The Shah, who had ruled for nearly fifty years, and was, perhaps, the ablest man in the country, was avaricious and continued the corrupt old practices, by which posts were sold to the highest bidder. He was also extremely uxorious, and was

constantly adding to his harem, the cost of which constituted an almost intolerable drain on his poverty-stricken kingdom. The Shah and grandees spent most of the money that reached the treasury, and little attempt was made to train or pay an army that would fight, or to appoint Governors who would rule efficiently. The country was thus defenceless and miserably poor.

At the same time, the old order was slowly changing, and this was due to a variety of causes. There were no railways or metalled roads in the country, but, owing to the central position of Persia, athwart the route to India, the Indo-European Telegraph Line was constructed across it and conferred signal benefits in many ways. The British officials who were scattered along the line gave news of the outside world and also ideas of law and order, while, through the Director, the Persian Government received accurate information as to the state of feeling in the country. Moreover, the Shah was able to dispatch his orders and frequently to check incipient risings, while his subjects, when oppressed beyond endurance, assembled in the telegraph offices and sent their petitions to their monarch. This practice was facilitated by telegraph offices being recognized as *bast* or "sanctuary," where the Governor's myrmidons were powerless to make arrests, while the belief prevailed that the wires actually ran to the foot of the throne.

There was also missionary effort, British and American, which deeply influenced thousands in the principal towns by the efficiency combined with sympathy displayed in the hospitals, and by the excellent education given at the schools. On the commercial side, the foundation of the Imperial Bank of Persia, a British institution, not only helped the Government financially, but brought Persian merchants into touch with European methods of business and also with the markets of the world; and finally, the influence of the British Minister and consular officials, that was exercised in the cause of law and order and of humanity, was often profound.

Politically speaking, the British and Russians were rivals for influence in Persia, and the Shah practically maintained his position by turning their rivalry to his own advantage. The British pressed the Government to preserve good order and security on the trade routes in the south, while Russia protected her subjects and forwarded their interests in the north. The fact that the capital and the two great cities of Tabriz and Meshed were situated comparatively close to the Russian frontier, gave Russia a great advantage, but against this was the high reputation of the British and their often-proved friendliness towards Persia.

The other Powers maintained Legations at Tehran, where their Ministers were delighted if they had a dozen subjects to protect, and the situation was aptly summed up by the French Minister's remark that the British and Russian Ministers played the game, while the other representatives marked the points.

Durand took over charge from Mr. (now Sir Conyngham) Greene, who had been acting as *Chargé d'Affaires* since the departure of Sir Frank Lascelles. Neither of the two Secretaries knew anything about Persia outside Tehran and, by an arrangement that was distinctly dangerous, the Oriental Secretary, who was the confidential channel of communication with the Persian Government, was a Persian, termed the Nawab.

He was a close adherent of Sadr-i-Azam, and gave that wily and wholly unscrupulous individual the opinions of the British Minister, that he had helped to form, whereas the Persian kept him in the dark about his proceedings, if they were likely to be displeasing to the British. From another point of view, Persians visiting the Legation were afraid to give expression to their views, and thus only carefully edited information reached the Minister, while the Legation suffered in public estimation by being considered to be identified with Sadr-i-Azam.

Apart from this serious drawback, Durand was delighted to be able to live a more active life than had been possible

in India, to take part in paper chases on horseback, to shoot and to play lawn tennis and cricket. The volume of work to be done was small for a man of his training and knowledge; and the climate at Tehran, and at the summer retreat of Gulahak, was very pleasant.

The Russian Legation, somewhat naturally, considered that the appointment of an official who had played the leading part in barring their southward march towards India betokened British activity in Persia, and showed signs of nervousness. However, the Mission to Persia of General Kuropatkin improved relations considerably. Durand writes in February, 1895:

> Very interesting conversation with Kuropatkin last night. He declared he had always been dead against a forward policy in Asia, and that, in 1885, when selected to command against Afghanistan, he had said in the Council that war with England was a great mistake, that even victory with the conquest of India would weaken Russia, and that defeat would mean the loss of all her provinces in Asia. He professed great friendship, but much resented the conduct of our officers in the matter of the Turkoman. I pointed to the Yanoff and Vannofski incidents and the constant threatening of the Russian Press, but assured him of my personal inclination to be friendly. He is a clever little man, but has small shifty eyes.

Two months later Durand gives his considered views on the Central Asian problem, as it appeared to him in Persia:

> On the one hand there is no doubt much force in the Russian contention that if we keep them out of Afghanistan we must be responsible for the control of Afghanistan. On the other hand is the fact that it is exceedingly difficult to control Afghanistan without occupying it, and the occupation of Afghanistan is a very serious thing.
>
> There are two elements in the problem which are new—or at least new to me. It becomes daily clearer to me that the Russians, though they fully understand the advantage of bluffing, and though they have eager frontier officers, are very nervous as to their own position in Asia and are much more afraid of us than we have ever given them credit for being. Kuropatkin, when he was here, told me

that he had deprecated war with England as very dangerous to Russia in Asia, and though I do not believe him to be as truthful a person as he is fond of declaring himself to be, I cannot resist the conviction that, under present circumstances, there is nothing the Russians less desire than a rupture with us. Secondly, I am convinced that the near approach of Russia to Afghanistan has had a decided effect in making the Afghans look to us for help and support. The Russians and not the English are the Power whose encroachments they now fear, and they are getting to understand that it suits us to strengthen them and keep them independent. I am treating the question as an isolated one. Of course, if our Government and the Russians can arrive at any general reshaping of their mutual relations and engagements, the question of Afghanistan becomes a portion only of a greater matter.

Durand had recently instituted tent-pegging, which deeply interested Kuropatkin and his staff. On one occasion the Russian General inadvertently crossed the track while Durand was galloping down it with his lance ready to strike the peg, and a serious accident was only averted by inches. The Cossack officers took to the sport so enthusiastically that it was arranged to send them two dozen lances from India. In the following year, Durand presented a silver spear for competition. His son came to stay for a few weeks before joining the 9th Lancers and, after a keen contest with Horace (now Sir Horace) Rumbold, won the spear, making twelve runs without a miss—a very fine performance, of which his father was justly proud.

After serving for a few months in Persia, Durand realized that there was little hope of progress under the existing order :

> The Shah is selling appointments and marrying new wives after his wont. Sadr-i-Azam, whom I have been taught by the Nawab to regard as a most patriotic and enlightened statesman, and who is a very pleasant fellow, is, I fear, as bad where his own interests are concerned as any other Persian. Fact after fact is coming out which shows him to be deep in all sorts of shady transactions, and my faith in him is becoming seriously weakened.
>
> The country is capable of great development. There is practically no debt, only half a year's revenue, and there are rich districts,

and possibilities of a considerable trade. But all progress and prosperity is made impossible by the universal sale of governorships and other posts to the highest bidder. The Governors give the Shah a big bribe and then go off to plunder their respective districts for a year. Pure and patriotic Sadr-i-Azam makes £50,000 a year by farming the customs, and some more by flooding the country with copper coin, while all the time deploring the villainy of the Mint farmer, with whom I find he is in partnership.

There is no army. The soldiers earn their living as money-lenders and in other ways, and don't know how to load their rifles or the rudiments of drill. I do not believe a shot would be fired if a single Russian brigade were to march on Tehran. The Shah is afraid of the mullas, who do much as they please, and there is really no government. The only chance of putting things to rights is by an agreement between us and the Russians, and this I fear is hopeless. The Shah looks to us as the one check on the Russians, and the Russians in many ways seem curiously afraid of us. There is no feeling of inferiority whatever, though as a matter of fact the real strength is with Russia.

Owing to his knowledge of Persian, Durand was able to establish a greater degree of intimacy with the Shah than his predecessors, who perforce depended on the stifling agency of interpreters. He had many long and interesting conversations with the virile old monarch.

Nasir-u-Din was devoted to camp life and to sport. He also fancied that he was a poet, and not without reason, for he could write good verses. On one occasion Durand approached the Shah with a request which he subsequently turned into verse[1]:

I stood before the dark-browed King
And said, "Our English singers crave,
Lord of Iran, a gracious thing,
Your care for Omar's ruined grave."

The old King laughed in merry scorn,
Brave heart that loved the ruby wine,
"Omar, the years his tent have torn,
His grave will eat no gold of mine.

[1] The first two stanzas of these verses form the motto of this chapter. They were written for the Omar Khayyám Club.

"Iran has living bards galore,
Better by far than Omar dead,
Why I myself . . ." He deigned no more,
But laughed and tossed a careless head.

I have already mentioned the Persian custom of taking sanctuary in telegraph offices. The British Legation was also a sanctuary, and Durand had an amusing experience in consequence :

One day a royal eunuch came galloping into the Legation in great haste and asked to see me on most important business. His message was that the Shah's wives had taken umbrage at his decision to marry a girl who was sister of one of his wives. The new favourite was the daughter of a gardener, whom the uxorious monarch had seen in one of his many gardens and loved, to the great indignation of her sister and against Persian custom.

The other wives took up the matter hotly and issued an ultimatum that if the Shah would not forgo his purpose, they would all leave the palace and take *bast* at the Legation, which was, they declared, a place of refuge for slaves like themselves, and a sanctuary for the oppressed.

I expressed myself as being highly honoured at this proof of their confidence and declared that the Legation was at the service of the ladies. Upon inquiring the size of the party, I was somewhat staggered to learn that there would be about three hundred in all. I said that the Legation would hardly hold so many, but with a sweep of his hand towards the lawn, the eunuch replied that a tent was all that was required, and as for food, a few sheep and some bread would suffice.

The eunuch then galloped off and returned two hours later, by which time tents had been pitched on the lawn; sheep had also been purchased, together with the entire contents of a baker's shop.

He declared that the arrangements were excellent, that the Shah was furious, and that the ladies were getting into their carriages. He again galloped off and we waited the arrival of the refugees with keen interest, when the eunuch reappeared like a whirlwind, and shouted out, wild with excitement, "The Shah has yielded, the ladies are getting out of their carriages and send you their grateful thanks."

Two days later, I wished to see Sadr-i-Azam, but was informed that he was on special duty and that all State business was suspended.

A fortnight had elapsed when, one day, he asked me to call. I found him chuckling, and he explained, with peals of laughter, that his special task had been to sow dissension among the ladies. So, for ten days he had gone from one to the other, telling tales and making mischief, and he ended his account with " now they are all fighting like wild cats, the Shah has married the daughter of the gardener, and has shown condescension towards this slave of Allah."

Another incident threw further light on the mentality of Persians :

We have had a miserable week, Roughy, our Yorkshire terrier, having been stolen, and Ella being quite inconsolable. I am happy to say he turned up again on Saturday, and the house is once more happy. It is rather a funny story as illustrating Persian ways.

Roughy disappeared in the semi-darkness close to our Legation, as we were returning from a walk. It seems that he stayed behind us and was chased by three pariah dogs in the road. This was seen by a couple of merry workmen, one of whom said : " Let us do a good action and save this creature of Allah." So they drove away the pariah dogs and caught Roughy, whom they had believed to be a cat. When they discovered it was a dog, they were much amused and walked down the bazaar calling out " Who will buy a lamb ? " A Persian colonel went up to them and bought Roughy for the equivalent of a shilling. He then took him home and offered him food, but he would not eat and " cried all night."

Meanwhile, I had written to the Chief of Police and offered a reward of ten pounds if Roughy was found, and the police had been all over the north of the city with criers, crying out that a dog belonging to the English Minister had been lost, that a reward of four pounds would be given, and threatening with terrible punishment anyone who kept him.

A week after Roughy had disappeared, a man told one of our servants that the dog was with the Persian colonel. He went off immediately and reached the house, but found the colonel was absent. Two of his brothers, however, appeared, and denied that Roughy was there. Our servant knew his fellow-countrymen and, as it was almost sunset, he asked for permission to say his prayers in the court-yard. The elder brother went off to fetch a carpet and our servant immediately offered the younger brother three gold coins to produce the dog. The boy thereupon opened a door and Roughy appeared. At that moment the colonel also appeared on

the scene, and said that the dog was his property. But our servant called Roughy by his proper name and "Roughy cried out and ran to me and jumped into my arms." The end of it was that the colonel beat the younger brother, called him *pidr-i-sukhta*, or "son of a burnt father," and took the money away from him, while Roughy was borne home in triumph.

Tehran was the head-quarters of a body of American missionaries, men and women of the highest character, who through their schools and hospitals did an immense amount of permanent good, to which Durand constantly testified both in Persia and, afterwards, in America. Although Presbyterians, they held a service of the Church of England for the British colony, which was much appreciated; they also married the living and buried the dead.

Durand held them in the highest esteem, and wrote in one of his letters to Mrs. Rivett-Carnac :

Birthdays are not very cheering things now, I think, but they ought to be. One ought to feel that each brings one a year nearer to eternal joy. Our American missionary was talking to us this afternoon of the joy of the real Christian in the perpetually recurring thought of the eternity of happiness before him, talking with tears in his eyes and his handsome face working all over. One could see he felt it to the bottom of his heart. I wished I could grasp the idea as he did. What strength it would give one.

Then we sang that dear old half-pagan hymn, "Jerusalem the golden—The shout of them that triumph—The song of them that feast." It seemed to me as if a strain of our Norse blood had come in there. What will it be, I wonder? Something the heart of man cannot conceive, but, above all, love for and delight in everyone about one, and grateful, ungrudging service.

During one winter that I spent at Tehran there was skating, which Durand much enjoyed. One of the Persian Ministers sent him messages, through me, that this pastime was *sabuk*, or light, and should not be indulged in by the British Minister, but to this advice he naturally turned a deaf ear. The Shah took advantage of the hard frost to order his Ministers to skate on the lake in front of the Palace, enjoying their discomfiture amazingly, and in-

cidentally turning the tables on the sender of the messages. He adored childish jokes, and one courtier won his heart by turning out all the lights in the Palace and then explaining that "*Le 'Chat' voit parfaitement bien la nuit.*" He was granted a pension for life by his appreciative master.

In spite of the disorganization and corruption that prevailed, Durand, with his great experience of Indian states, considered the situation in Persia serious but not desperate. He realized that the Russians would not co-operate with the British in the reorganization of the Persian finances or administration, and that it was therefore impossible to carry through any reform of radical importance. He consequently recommended that the existing policy of maintaining the integrity and independence of Persia should be continued and, as occasion permitted, should be developed.

Durand as the great boundary maker was naturally anxious to complete the demarcation of the boundary between Persia and British Baluchistan. The question had first been raised in connexion with the construction of the Indo-European Telegraph line, already referred to. The country was explored by the late Sir Frederic Goldsmid, and his labours, when serving as chief of an Anglo-Persian Commission, resulted in the delimitation of a frontier from Gwatar on the Arabian Sea to Kuhak. At that time Kuhak was held by an independent chief, while the country to the north was unexplored and of unknown ownership. Later, in 1872, Goldsmid laid down a boundary for Sistan, which ran ninety miles to the south of the cultivated area, terminating at the conspicuous mountain termed Kuh-i-Malik-Siah, referred to on page 222. This second Commission left a section, some three hundred miles in length, between Kuhak on the south and the "Mountain of the Black Chief" on the north.

Shortly after the departure of the earlier Mission from the country, the Persian Governor seized Kuhak, an act that was not recognized by the British Government.

As the years passed, under the inspiration of Sir Robert Sandeman the British decided to restore law and order in the outlying districts of British Baluchistan, and, in pursuance of this policy, stationed a small force of Indian troops at Panjgur, close to the frontier. The position of affairs had now entirely changed, and in order to stop the raiding that had ruined the country it was essential, in the first instance, to lay down a definite boundary in the undefined area.

Durand accordingly opened negotiations, but, most unfortunately, the Shah was informed that the date groves of the Mashkel, the only area in the desert expanse possessing the slightest value, were worth half Baluchistan. As he already possessed Kuhak and the date groves would probably not be given to Persia by a Commission, His Majesty was unwilling to pay the cost of a Commission, and so delayed matters interminably.

Such was the position of affairs when Naoroz Khan, the Sirdar of Kharan, swooped down on the date groves in question and occupied them. At that time I was Consul for Kirman and Persian Baluchistan, and, upon news of this descent of the desert raiders reaching the Persian Governor-General, he wrote me an official letter, demanding that Naoroz Khan, who was a British subject, should be expelled from the sacred soil of Persia. In reply, I pointed out that I could take no action until the frontier line was settled and that such incidents were likely to recur so long as the present unsatisfactory state of affairs continued. This raid brought home to the Shah the inconvenience of a policy of inaction, and he immediately agreed to the settlement of the question by a Commission, on which I served under Sir Thomas Holdich.

After some trouble, owing to the local authorities attempting to force the hands of the Persian Commissioner, the frontier was demarcated on lines already settled at Tehran, Kuhak being finally adjudged to Persia, while the date groves were divided, the southern and more valuable group being awarded to the Kalat State. Through

the labours of this Commission, Durand had the satisfaction of delimitating the last section of the boundary of the Indian Empire on its western side.

The most unfortunate legacy that Durand inherited at Tehran was the debt owed by the Persian Government on account of the tobacco *Régie*. This ill-judged concession, which was granted in 1890, gave a British company control over the production, sale and export of tobacco in Persia. It affected the entire adult population, since, in Persia, all men and women smoke. The gross unfairness of its provisions aroused hostility and then fanaticism, which became so threatening that the Shah cancelled the concession and agreed to pay compensation to the extent of half a million sterling, a sum that may be considered to constitute the beginning of the national debt of Persia.

Durand recommended that Great Britain should lend Persia this sum at a low rate of interest on approved security to clear off this debt, which was a source of embarrassment to the Persian Government and might drive it to seek help from Russia. Unfortunately Durand's prediction was fulfilled, as will be seen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ASSASSINATION OF SHAH NASIR-U-DIN

The ball no question makes of Ayes or Noes,
But Here or There as strikes the player goes;
And He that toss'd you down into the Field,
He knows about it all—HE knows—HE knows!
—OMAR KHAYYÁM.

IN May, 1896, Nasir-u-Din was preparing to celebrate the fiftieth year of his reign, when a fanatic, taking advantage of his kindly custom of receiving petitions personally, fired at him with fatal effect.

The diary runs:

About 1 p.m. on May Day, a man whom I did not know came from Sadr-i-Azam with a message that the Shah had been shot at, and that he wished me to know in advance lest I should hear exaggerated reports. I directed the Nawab to make inquiries, and he returned from the Palace with the news that the Shah was dead, the bullet having traversed his heart.

After I had dispatched the necessary telegrams, Naib-u-Saltana (the favourite son of the Shah and the Commander-in-Chief of the Persian Army) begged me to visit him. I found him seated on the ground in the middle of the gravel path in front of his door, with his light blue trousers and patent leather boots covered with dust. After condolences he explained to me the alarm he felt for his own safety, for his property, and for his family. I advised him to telegraph to the Vali Ahd (or Heir Apparent) that he was loyal and to keep his charge in order. But he was utterly unnerved, sobbing and wailing dismally, and finally, some hours later, placed himself under Russian protection.

I then proceeded to the Palace at the request of Sadr-i-Azam. I found the Shah's brothers and chief officials standing in the courtyard near the tank with the German Minister and Russian Chargé d'Affaires. After expressing my regret at what had occurred, I

joined Sadr-i-Azam and we began to discuss the situation. Almost immediately afterwards a man came and informed us that the Vali Ahd was in the telegraph office at Tabriz and Sadr-i-Azam suggested our going to the telegraph office in the Palace, which we did. At the door, in attendance, were some Persians and the Russian Colonel of Cossacks.

When we had signalled our arrival, the Vali Ahd asked who was in the Palace, and Sadr-i-Azam gave a list of the names. The Vali Ahd asked whether Naib-u-Saltana was there, and Sadr-i-Azam said, No, that he was attending to the troops, which was more amiable than true. The Vali Ahd then sent a very good and dignified telegram saying Sadr-i-Azam was appointed Prime Minister permanently, and calling upon all present to support him. The Shah's brothers and the Ministers and officials sent a suitable reply assuring him of their loyalty.

After this I sent condolences, to which the Vali Ahd replied, and then followed a discussion on various points, the military arrangements in the town, etc., etc. Eventually about 9.30 we got away, and I drove home, all being quite quiet in the streets.

Sadr-i-Azam impressed me very favourably. He had one or two fits of sobbing and semi-hysterics, and seemed at one time in great pain, but pulled himself together with the aid of much tea and tobacco, drinking the former from the spout of a tea-pot. He then showed remarkable promptness and ability in all his telegrams, and in his arrangements for the security of the town, and so on. My estimate of his powers of organization rose very rapidly.

We spent a great part of the night in telegraphing, and lay in bed late. Between three and four o'clock in the afternoon I went down to see Sadr-i-Azam again, and found him well and confident. He said he had had "a good cry" and felt better now; that it was the necessity for self-restraint that had upset him so.

Meanwhile at noon the new Shah had been proclaimed by his officers at Tabriz, the Consular Corps assisting. But he seems in no hurry to start. I have had to take the responsibility of doing all this, as I could not wait for orders, but Lord Salisbury has approved. He could hardly do otherwise, for, in spite of my request last August for timely preparation in anticipation of the Shah's death, he left me wholly without instructions

Six weeks later, the Shah, who was afraid of attempts on his life, "entered Tehran by stealth—a wretched

thing to do"—and ascended the throne without any opposition.

Durand received warm official approval for the promptitude and judgment that he had displayed, to which was mainly due the undisputed succession of the new Shah. Curzon wrote that he was consulting with Lord Salisbury and giving him his views on what ought to be done, while Durand was anticipating them by doing it in Persia.

It was customary for the staff of a new Shah to receive a generous share of the loaves and fishes of office. Sadr-i-Azam considered himself strong enough to defy this custom and, after holding his own for some months, fell.

We have had a sudden change. On the morning of the 24th November (1896) Sadr-i-Azam wrote to the Nawab informing me that he had been removed from office by the Shah. Since then he has been in fear of his life, and has asked for a *ghulam*[1] to protect him. He is to go to Kum, accompanied by Scully.[2] He is of course being treated by the Persians with much petty indignity.

This has been brought on largely by his own arrogance and greed of power and place, but the immediate cause is Farman Farma,[3] who, being denied the army, united with the Tabriz faction and certain officials here. If only they can pull together they may do well enough. Farman Farma and Mushir-u-Dola are the two strongest men in the Government.

The new Cabinet was most friendly to the British, but Farman Farma pointed out that the Nawab was so strongly identified with the dismissed Prime Minister that they had no confidence in him. The Nawab thereupon took leave, and did not return to Tehran, but for over two years he had been a cause of deep anxiety to Durand.

[1] A *ghulam* is a mounted servant.
[2] Doctor Scully was the acting Legation physician.
[3] H.H. Farman Farma was the son-in-law and brother-in-law of the new Shah.

At the end of the year I brought polo sticks and balls to Tehran, hoping to restart the game in Persia, which was its original home. Rumbold, who had played in Egypt, was keen, and the first game inspired great enthusiasm. Durand asked me if I thought he could learn, and he was soon practising steadily and joining in the games, albeit he was severely handicapped by the difficulty of finding ponies up to his weight. Indeed, he ran very great risks from lack of weight-carrying horses and ponies, and suffered many a severe fall. Once established, polo flourished at Tehran, and Durand played regularly and well, not only in Persia but later at Madrid, thereby setting up a fine record for a British Ambassador.

Apart from the members of the British colony, there were few regular players, but among them was Baron von Gaertner, the German Minister, whose death inspired Durand to write the following verses :

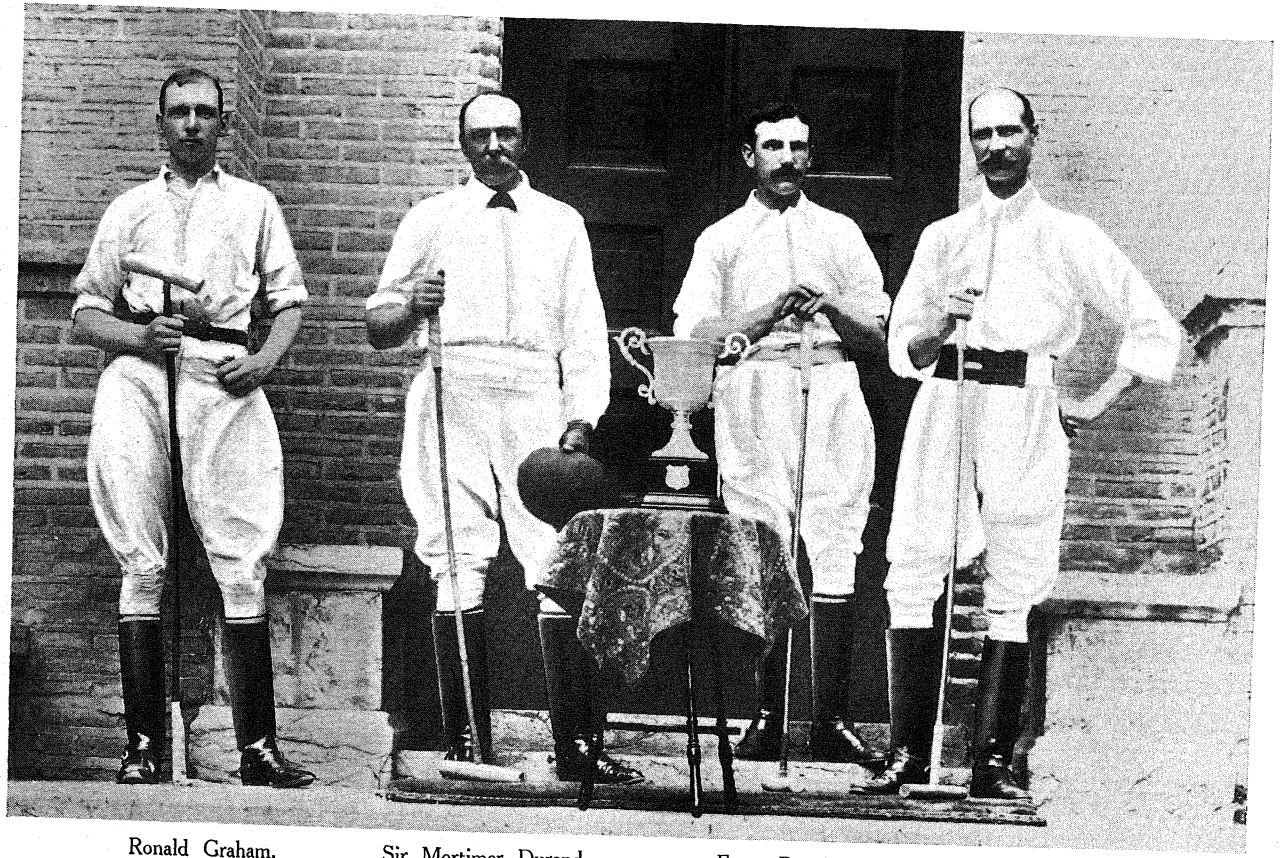
HURLINGHAM, JUNE, 1897

Renton was playing a wonderful back,
He had "saved," when the ball had a yard to roll,
Turned on it, carried it right through the pack,
And driving and galloping landed a goal.

Behind me a thundering shout, "Well played!"
"Well played!" and I turned to a voice that I knew,
And a strong brown hand on my shoulder was laid,
By a big-limbed Teuton of six-foot-two.

And oh! it was pleasant on Hurlingham Green,
That long bright day of an English June,
And he sat there enjoying it, happy and keen,
And the last merry gallop came all too soon.

And then I remember he rose with a sigh,
"Aho! I am sorry—a grand game done,"
And he held my hand, and he said "Good-bye,
Good-bye, we shall meet in the Land of the Sun."



Ronald Graham. Sir Mortimer Durand. Ernest Rennie. Lt.-Col. H. P. Picot.

THE LEGATION POLO TEAM, TEHRAN, 1898.

ASSASSINATION OF NASIR-U-DIN

PERSIA, MARCH, 1898

Close to the crest of the desolate pass,[1]
A lone broad plain where the snow lies deep,
Not a tree, not a bird, not a tussock of grass,
The great hills sleeping a deathlike sleep.

Two mules down on the treacherous road,
Over the stream where the snow-bridge sank,
Short mad struggle to lift their load,
Bloodshot eyeball and labouring flank.

Little is left of the fading day.
"What are they carrying, Akbar Khan?"
"The *Almán*[2] minister's corpse," they say,
"They are bearing it back to Farangistan."

Dead!—And I saw it, the soft June sky,
And the smooth green sward when the game was done,
And I stood bareheaded, and said "Good-bye,
Good-bye"—We had met in the Land of the Sun.

In February, 1897, Durand took leave:

It was a typical Persian start. The day was cloudless, the long line of the snowy range standing out in dazzling purity. But not half a mile from the Legation our pole broke, and we remained in the road for an hour until Akbar Khan, Master of the Horse, appeared at full gallop with another, which was hammered in with a big stone, and so we started.

The party was held up by heavy snowfalls, and the crossing of the Kharzan, or "Donkey Striking," Pass is described:

We started at a little after eight in bright, clear weather, but with a strong wind against us, which was making the frozen snow fly fast. A snow hole near our village looked like a huge witch's cauldron, the snow whirling into and out of it.

For two hours and a quarter, till we reached the filthy little Kurd village of Ismailabad, the cold was intense, the wind dead against us, and the snow-wreaths whirling swiftly past on the frozen surface till one's head whirled too. At times, though rarely, the

[1] The Kharzan Pass.

[2] *Almán* is the Persian for German. *Farangistan*, or "The Land of the Franks," is Europe.

snow was blown up high and obscured the animals ahead of us. There were two or three caravans on the road. At Ismailabad we had some food in a very odorous underground stable, a really excellent breakfast, omelette, etc. Everything hard frozen, including my moustache and fur coat. Our servants were really clever and willing.

Then another hour's climb to the summit of the Kharzan, in bitter wind again, and the worst was over. Soon we were going down, in shelter, on the sunny leeside of the hill, and not long afterwards the track actually began to show signs of thawing.

Fortunately for travellers to Tehran, a Russian company was already at work making a road that improved matters considerably in the near future, but no one who has made it can ever forget a really bad crossing of the Kharzan Pass.

Lady Durand had suffered severely from asthma and insomnia in Persia, and also felt the separation from her daughter. Consequently Durand's leave was extended from a few months to a year, but, even so, she failed to recover her health, and was never again really well. Durand was, in consequence, not particularly pleased to return to Persia. Moreover, he felt that while it was impossible to carry through any measure of importance, it was a difficult and even a dangerous post to hold from the point of view of his reputation.

During his absence, negotiations for a loan to the Persian Government had been set on foot with Mushir-u-Dola, who was the Prime Minister. The security of the Customs of Southern Persia was ample, but, unfortunately, the financiers insisted upon immediate control of the Customs, instead of eventual control in case of default by Persia, and the Legation supported this view, which the Persian Government refused to accept.

This failure to negotiate the loan caused the downfall of the friendly and progressive Mushir-u-Dola and the return to power of Sadr-i-Azam. Forced to procure money for the spendthrift Shah, he had recourse to Russia and, in return for an agreement to pay off the *Régie* debt

and a stipulation not to borrow money from any other Power for a term of ten years, negotiated a loan of rather over three millions sterling. This sum was speedily absorbed by the *Régie* debt, the demands of the Shah and his courtiers and by the payment of salaries and pensions, and was followed by a second loan of one million and a half pounds. Persia had started down the broad road that leads to bankruptcy.

Durand regretted bitterly that the British negotiations had failed, and in February, 1900, he wrote:

> The Russian loan is an accomplished fact, and for a time at least, probably for good, we shall greatly suffer in consequence. Sadr-i-Azam has simply sold himself, and I have no doubt he has made various engagements which will militate against us. It is very unlucky we did not find money for Mushir-u-Dola, as I tried to do.

It is one of the standing rules of Oriental diplomacy to weaken the influence of the representative of a Power by personal attacks. Sadr-i-Azam upon his return to power was disgusted to find that no loan had been arranged by the British, and that the Nawab had left the Legation. He determined to try for the return of his partisan, and set to work to accuse Durand of harshness, of lack of sympathy and, generally, of treating Persia like a Moslem state in India, hoping by these attacks to procure his recall. The Nawab made similar complaints in London, and although Lord Salisbury finally showed his entire approval of Durand, the Minister's position was very difficult for a considerable time.

The fact is that the Foreign Office at that time had insufficient experience of the unscrupulous Oriental statesman, and suffered accordingly. The secretaries appointed to Persia or other Oriental countries live mainly in a European society, and the Orientals they meet are, in the majority of cases, Europeanized. They rarely learn the language or study the country seriously, but do the routine work of the post, and then pass on.

The charge against Durand was entirely unjustified, for, having realized that it was likely to be made, he had taken special care to avoid bringing undue pressure on the Persian Government. At the same time, Persians generally regarded him with more respect than affection, owing to his stiff manner, but I recollect a grandee saying to me many years after his departure: "Durand was your great Minister."

In the autumn of 1899, Durand, ever anxious to gain first-hand information, decided to make an extensive tour in South-West Persia, being the first British Minister to do so. He was accompanied by Lady Durand, who published an interesting account of the journey under the title of "An Autumn Tour in Western Persia." Ernest Rennie, a Secretary of the Legation, accompanied the party. The Persian escort was commanded by a good-natured officer who, upon joining the camp with a splitting headache, exulted in the fact as proving the excellence of his send-off.

Passing through Kum and Kashan, the first halt was made at Isfahan, the ancient capital of Persia, where Zil-i-Sultan, brother of the Shah, welcomed the party with the hospitality for which Persia is noted.

Zil-i-Sultan was a Persian Governor of the old school, ruthless and astute. To give an example of his ruthlessness, on one occasion a village headman ventured to appeal to the Shah against his extortions, with the result that Zil-i-Sultan received a well-merited rebuke and was told that a ruler should be the shepherd of his people. This rankled in his mind for some years, and when he was certain that the matter had been forgotten at the capital, he decided to take his revenge.

He went on tour, and on reaching his village, sent for the headman in question and said to him: "You were a very brave man to complain against me to the Shah. Your heart must be different from the hearts of other men and I should like to inspect it." He then made a sign to the executioner, who was always in attendance. The

wretched man was held down and was done to death in barbarous fashion.

Zil-i-Sultan was equally astute. On another occasion he summoned a local Governor whose revenue was in arrears. He discussed the matter with him in a friendly manner, while, in accordance with Persian custom, three cups of tea were served. Then came the usual cup of coffee. Now Kajar princes were accustomed to poison those of their subjects whom they wished to put out of the way in this beverage, so much so that "Kajar coffee" became proverbial. The Governor then, fearing to drink his coffee, tried to excuse himself on the ground of feeling ill, but, as this excuse was not accepted, he turned green with fear and began to offer sums of money for his life. Zil-i-Sultan said never a word until the bidding had reached a figure representing the entire fortune of the man, when he signified that he would accept the sum. The wretched Governor wrote a bill for the amount, which his host pocketed. He then, with grim humour, stretched out his hand, took his unwilling guest's coffee—and drank it.

As far as Isfahan, the march had been due south, but it was now changed to south-west, to the mountainous Bakhtiari country, through which Messrs. Lynch were opening a route practicable for mules, the most important work being the construction of an iron girder bridge across the Karun River, which had hitherto taken a heavy toll of man and beast in the spring and early summer floods.

The Bakhtiari Khans welcomed the travellers warmly and entertained them with lavish hospitality. They then entered the mountains. On one occasion—

> There was a very steep slope ending in a drop over a precipice some hundreds of feet in depth. Just as we reached the critical point, the one-eyed cook fell and his lambskin *kulla* or headpiece dropped and rolled down the slope. The cook ran after it, and for a moment we were in terror lest he should lose his footing and go over the

edge. However, he pulled himself up in time, and stood looking on ruefully while his *kulla* disappeared into space.[1]

Among the incidents of the march was the appearance of a chained prisoner, who appealed for justice. He freely admitted that he had killed a man, but urged that, in view of the provocation he had received, the punishment was excessive. "After all," he exclaimed, "one must kill people occasionally." This remark was received with a laugh and the homicide was apparently released in honour of the British Minister.

In Persia there is a firm belief that every European is a skilled doctor, and, one day, a wild tribesman demanded medicine to cure a wounded arm that had become powerless. When examined it was tightly bandaged with filthy rags of printed calico, but, upon these being removed, a long healthy scar was revealed, and it was apparent that only the bandages had prevented a complete cure. Durand, thereupon, began to work the joints very slowly and carefully, and very soon they all moved. The man believed that a miracle had been wrought, and with a cry threw himself at Durand's feet and kissed them in a transport of gratitude.

Upon reaching the Karun it was found that the bridge was not yet completed, and the party was conveyed across in a cradle, while the animals swam across at some risk. The Bakhtiaris were not unanimously in favour of the creation of this trade route. Some of them realized that it would in course of time put an end to their state of semi-independence, while the tribesmen complained that there were no stones left for their feet to catch hold of!

After crossing the Karun the mountains became lower, and the party was soon riding across the level plains of Arabistan to Ahwaz, where they were greeted by the Resident of the Persian Gulf and others who had taken the leading part in opening up this trade route.

The second and still more arduous task that lay before

[1] "An Autumn Tour in Western Persia," p. 115.

the travellers was to return to upland Persia across the rugged and little-known district of Luristan. They travelled up the Karun to Shushtar by a British steamer and then rode to Dizful. Close by were the ruins of Shushan, where the party read the Book of Esther, and were struck by the contrast between the description of the splendid palace where the great king feasted and "the lonely mound surrounded by the desert, a great hazy full moon rising slowly over it, and no sound but the occasional cry of the jackals, or the wail of a plover flitting about like a departed soul."

From Dizful the first march lay across the plain to the outer ranges. On the second stage they met the Sagwand tribe migrating to the plains for the winter:

> It was a most striking sight. As far as one could see up the long valley stretched thousands of sheep and goats and donkeys and small cattle, with men, women and children here and there driving the animals. The men were wild-looking creatures, all in black, and some of them well armed. The women had long hanging side-locks and were dressed chiefly in indigo-dyed dresses. A few were pretty, or might have been if they had been clean.[1]

As might be expected, the baggage mules were an irresistible temptation to the tribesmen. Two were seized and only recaptured after a long pursuit, but the loads had disappeared.

The whole country was in a lawless state, owing to the tribes acknowledging no supreme chief, and the Governor of Arabistan had handed over Durand to the protection of the powerful chief of the Derekvand tribe, with a threat that he would flay him alive if anything happened to the British Minister. The looting of the two mules, for which he would be held responsible, naturally upset the chief, and as a still wilder tribe was following the trail of the Sagwands it was wisely decided to take another, albeit a more difficult, route. This involved crossing two very steep passes, but by dint of hard marching the

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 201.

party rode into Khurramabad safe and sound. There they had reached well-known caravan routes, and they parted with deep and probably mutual regret from the manly tribesmen of Luristan.

By this journey Durand examined and drew the attention of the Foreign Office to two difficult trade routes that it was desirable to open up in the interests of British trade. The Bakhtiari route is now established, and, through the efforts of the new Shah, the savage Lurs have been subdued and a military road is being constructed through their mountains. In course of time this may develop into the chief trade artery of Persia.

Durand thus summarized this journey in a letter to a friend :

> We returned a few days ago from a journey to Isfahan, Ahwaz, Dizful, and Khurramabad which was interesting. We were absent eighty days and covered over 1,200 miles, crossing and re-crossing the great range by two possible future trade routes. At present they are rough mule tracks, with much scrambling over rocks and swimming of rivers. The Bakhtiaris and Lurs were very pleasant to us. They are extremely poor, living mostly on acorns gathered in their great oak forests, but almost every man carries a Martini or other breechloader. Zil-i-Sultan and other governors were also most civil, and it was evident that everyone wished to make us comfortable and happy. All seemed much surprised at my wife doing the march with me, and it was a hard march for a woman.

Lady Durand suffered from the hardships and from anxiety about her son, who was taking part in the Boer War and was reported to be seriously wounded. Consequently, in the spring of 1900, Durand was again forced to apply for leave, as the doctors ordered her home, and this brought to an end his five years' sojourn in the mediæval kingdom of Persia.

To summarize Durand's services in Persia, it is clear that his profound knowledge of the problems of Central Asia enabled him to advise the Foreign Office on Persian policy better than any of his immediate predecessors, while

the fact that he had filled the post of Foreign Secretary in India ensured the due interests of that empire receiving full consideration. His advice was of peculiar value in view of the appointment of Lord Curzon to India at the beginning of 1899. That statesman raised the question of our policy in Persia, and carried out many of Durand's recommendations for the foundation of consulates at important centres and in other ways.

During Durand's tenure of the Legation the difficult situation arising from the assassination of the Shah was handled with much skill, and the recommendation made on the subject of a loan to Persia was entirely sound, while Durand was in no way responsible for the unfortunate failure of the negotiations. Lord Salisbury showed his appreciation of Durand's services by the award of the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, and by promotion to the Embassy at Madrid.

CHAPTER XIX

THE EMBASSY AT MADRID

Yesterday was one of the most beautiful days I remember in Casa di Campo. It was fine but showery, with wandering little storm clouds. Over Madrid and the plains to the south a quiet day, with white round clouds and blue, and streaks of horizontal cloud here and there. A rainbow appeared over Madrid, between us and the city, with a screen of falling rain.—DURAND.

DURAND was much pleased at his appointment as Ambassador to the Court of Spain. He had been quite long enough at Tehran, which was considered to be a grave for reputations in the Diplomatic Service, while, from his special point of view, it had the added drawback that unscrupulous Sadr-i-Azam was his bitter enemy.

He received many congratulations from friends, and realized that one of the plums of the service had fallen to him at the early age of fifty, and that he had definitely "made good" in his new career. He also confidently anticipated that Lady Durand's health would benefit by the change of climate, but, most unfortunately, this hope was not realized. Indeed, owing to almost continuous illness, combined with the distaste for general society that accompanied it, Lady Durand was never able to carry out successfully the important but onerous duties that fall to the lot of an Ambassador's wife.

Durand described his journey to Madrid in the autumn of 1900:

It is curious to pass from the rolling garden of Kent to the flat plains of France with their dreary lines of poplars just touched with yellow. Then, in the morning, to find oneself among the bare, stony wilds of Spain, with flat-topped hills like the Deccan, and brown plains with irrigation channels like Persia. Here and there a mud wall which a waler would love to jump and I too. Then, as one re-enters the hills, stone walls, and square-towered churches dotted

about the rolling heights and deep pine-clad valleys ; and dark ilex patches here and there on hill and hollow, looking like olives.

His first impression of Madrid runs :

Rode in Casa di Campo, a beautiful open park just across the river. The city ends abruptly at the river and all beyond is open country, with beautiful firm, soft, tracks among the broom and ilex. Met the Infantas driving in carriage drawn by four fast mules. There is a range of mountains to the north, very like Tehran. Indeed, Madrid is a pleasant combination of the civilization of a western capital with the blue sky and open country and sense of freedom and elbow room which make the charm of the East.

His official reception by the Queen-Regent was the first ceremony of the new Ambassador :

It was a most imposing affair, really beautifully done, accurate to a minute, and very magnificent. My own State coach, two or three hundred years old they said, was lined with white velvet embroidered, or rather woven, with peacock feathers, colours much faded. Other coaches were fine too, and Zarheo, the Introducer of Ambassadors, was charming. The troops and halberdiers were magnificently turned out. In the audience hall were the Ministers and many Court officials and ladies. I had to make a speech in French, and the Queen answered in Spanish. Then she came down from the dais and had a little talk, asking after Ella and Jo, and "The Queen Empress."

The King, then a boy, appealed to Durand :

He is tall and long limbed for his age, and has an excellent seat on a horse. I never saw a pleasanter sight than at the review when he cantered up to the Royal stand, reined in his big English charger, and raised his sword with a smiling salute to the Queen. I hope his love and respect for her may endure. He will need all her help in the next few years. But just now all seems well. He is greeted with a storm of *Vivas* whenever he appears and bids fair to become a popular idol. It is a dangerous pedestal for a boy of sixteen.

The Durands duly settled into the Embassy, which had little to recommend it, except its historical associations.

It is dark with very little sun in winter, and it is in bad repair. The stables are in the basement, which is unpleasant, and there is

no garden, the house being at the corner of two streets and built round a small flagged *patio*, with a single acacia tree in the centre. It was once the residence of Cardinal Ximenes, and the old Inquisition building, now a convent, is just opposite. There was a subterranean passage between the two, which is now blocked up.

The building was examined shortly afterwards and declared to be unsafe, but it took a long time to find the money for the present fine Embassy, and Durand had to put up with the old insanitary building, where he had to apologize to his guests for their uncomfortable quarters. Partly on this account, but also owing to the unfortunate resemblance of Madrid to Tehran, a resemblance that included the same dry climate, Lady Durand's health did not improve, although the moist air of the sea-side resort of Zarauz, where the summer was spent, was specially suitable to her.

At this period Durand much enjoyed the society of his daughter, who was devoted to riding, and, within a month of reaching Madrid, he writes :

> Jo and I went to our first meet with the Sociedad de Caza. Small field, and too many hares, but we had a pleasant day. The Conde de Pena Ramiro, one of the original founders, was out, and told us he had been out every year for fifty years. Everyone was most kind and pleasant. Unluckily one hunting day is Sunday, but once a week is enough.

At the end of November young Durand, who had served with the 9th Lancers from the beginning of the Boer War and had been twice wounded, reached Madrid on a few weeks' leave, and the entries in the diary prove the intense pleasure that he gave by his visit, while it also revived the pride of the sword, which was very deep-seated in Durand.

About this time Lord Lansdowne was appointed Foreign Secretary, and Durand felt much pleased that he was, once again, working under a chief who knew him well, and whom he entirely trusted.

The death of Queen Victoria occurred shortly after Durand had reached Madrid, and he writes :

I have received innumerable marks of sympathy, and even the Spanish newspapers have been most respectful and eloquent in her honour. The chorus of regret and veneration throughout the world has been something such as the world has never known. To my great pleasure it has been very specially warm in America. To-day I saw the Queen and the Infanta Isabel, to thank them for their sympathy. The Queen kept me talking a long time and was quite delightful. She was full of praise of everything English.

Durand attended the funeral of the Great Queen in London, and in March welcomed Lord Carrington and his staff, who came to Madrid to announce the accession of King Edward VII.

The next ceremony that the Ambassador attended is described :

Holy Thursday, and the town is in mourning, flags half-mast, sentries with arms reversed, and no carriages out. The streets are full of people going from church to church, the women all in mantillas, some white, some black, many with carnations in their hair. The effect is very pretty.

At 1.30 the Queen went through the ceremony of washing the feet of twelve (or thirteen ?) poor women, and giving dinner to thirteen poor men, mostly blind. The *Corps Diplomatique* attended in uniform, the ladies in high dress and white mantillas. Jo went with the Radowitz girls in black mantillas. They lunched here, and looked very picturesque

The men sat directly under us, and, before each man, on a long narrow table with a white cloth, was a plate with a napkin and a loaf of bread, also a knife and wooden fork and spoon, a small double glass salt-cellar and an immense pitcher of red wine, white and blue crockery as big as a washing ewer. After the foot-washing, which was over on the opposite side of the room, the Queen, who had come in with fourteen ladies in waiting and a lot of men in uniform, came over to our side of the room and put down plate after plate of fish and other things before each man. Then she removed each plate and handed it over to her ladies. At last she removed the pitchers of wine, handing each with both hands over her train—of white grey satin, which was held all the time by a man in uniform. The

last pitcher a lady at the end of the row spilt over her dress. Then the Queen removed the plates and glasses, piling salt-cellars, spoons, etc., on the plates. Finally all the Court went out, bowing to the Princesses on our left, and to the *Corps Diplomatique* as they had done on entrance, and we went home.

Durand continued to play polo at Madrid, where the game is described as "wild, no passing or pairing." He bought some barbs through his friend, Sir George White, at Gibraltar, and also an Argentine pony, and played regularly. He was thus able to lead the sane, active life that had always been his ideal and kept in perfect health. After all, he was only fifty and had always, as far as possible, avoided late hours. Moreover, as it happened, the Spanish nobility kept much to themselves and there were, in consequence, fewer social functions at Madrid than in other European capitals.

Connected with the arrogant aloofness of the grandees, there was considerable friction on questions of precedence, the Spanish peers refusing to allow Ambassadors the precedence that is invariably granted at other European Courts. On one occasion there was an evening reception held at the palace in honour of the visit of the King of Portugal. The diplomats were ushered into a long room, at the far end of which was a door opening on to a corridor. Across this was another room, in which were assembled the grandees of Spain. Both doors were guarded by halberdiers, dressed in white and scarlet.

When the fanfare of trumpets and the playing of the *Marcha Real* announced the approach of the Royal procession, the *doyen* of the *Corps Diplomatique* advanced to the doorway. The Royal procession swept down the corridor, the halberdiers disappeared, and there was a fierce struggle down the corridor by the rival parties, in which one may feel sure that Durand did not join. He must have felt disgusted at the scene.

He once referred to the amazing pride of the Spanish nobility and told me that he had taken the trouble to make a list from which it appeared that there were 2,149 peers

in Spain as against one-third of that number in Great Britain, with a population at least double that of Spain.

Durand attended more than one bull-fight with an open mind:

> It was a striking thing, and the men show much courage and skill, but the massacre of the horses is bloody and brutal. We saw a very curious scene. Frentes, the great matador, who gets 6,000 pesetas for each *corrida*, was off colour, or had a badly made bull. He made sixteen unsuccessful attempts to kill, and at last men were brought in to remove the bull—a great disgrace—and then 15,000 people went wild with rage and insisted on his being expelled from the Plaza. He took it in a very dignified way, and I was sorry for him.
>
> I also saw a bull refuse to fight, and after shouts of "Firego, firego!" the firework banderillas were brought in. This was unpleasant, but the bull seemed to suffer less than I expected. So did the horses, of which several were killed.
>
> It is in some ways a beastly and debasing sight, but it is also fine in the skill and courage shown, and *qua* cruelty it seems to me little more so than pig-sticking, and less so than slaughtering hundreds of pigeons and pheasants. The horses are a horror.

I recollect asking Durand how the Spaniards would regard a man who declined to attend bull-fights. His reply was that he would be considered to be a white-livered cur. He also told me that when he was at Madrid, it was decided to open a branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; that great enthusiasm was shown at the meeting and that every resolution was carried by acclamation, including one to raise the necessary funds by a specially fine bull-fight under Royal patronage! It is interesting to note that *futbolismo*, as football is termed, is making such progress in Spain that it is becoming a rival to *la corrida*, which is itself being reformed by the elimination of the ghastly butchery of the horses.

When Durand assumed charge at Madrid, in October, 1900, Spain had recently passed through the searching ordeal of war with the United States and, by a treaty signed in December, 1898, had surrendered her colonial empire,

with the exception of the Caroline Islands which Germany purchased from her. This was a serious disaster to a very proud nation, but it relieved the country from a constant drain on its resources and set it free to attend to urgently needed internal reforms.

Señor Sagasta, the Liberal leader, who had to bear the unpopularity of losing the war and of signing the peace treaty, resigned, and the Queen-Regent confided the difficult task of reorganization to Señor Silvela, the recognized leader of the Conservative and Catholic party.

The sweeping reforms and heavy taxation that the situation demanded met with serious opposition, but were carried through with a strong hand, although Silvela sacrificed his able Finance Minister, Señor Villaverde, hoping by this means to avoid unpopularity. But in this he was mistaken and he was obliged to proclaim martial law in some of the provinces and also at Madrid.

As Silvela was not only attacked for the ruthlessness of his action on the one hand, but was considered to be weak by an influential section of his own party, he was obliged to resign in March, 1901, and was succeeded by Sagasta, who remained in power until December, 1902.

During this difficult period the young King took over the reins of power, and the marked lack of respect shown by him to his Ministers discredited the Liberal party, which also suffered from secession to the Conservatives.

Silvela, with Villaverde as Finance Minister, again came into power, but there were serious riots and, as a result of a crisis which occurred in the spring of 1903, he was obliged to resign. His successor was Villaverde, who remained in power until the end of 1903. In fact, the three years that Durand spent in Spain constituted a period of unrest and disturbance, the population rioting mainly because the conditions of life were intolerable.

Shortly after his arrival at Madrid, Durand wrote:

I do not quite understand the situation, though the Foreign Secretary explained it to me at length two or three days ago, at our

first interview. He begged me not to believe, and seemed anxious that Lord Salisbury should not believe, the newspaper stories about General Weyler. He laughed at the idea of Weyler "playing the Bonaparte," assuring me that he was just *un général comme un autre*, and had neither the wish nor the power to go beyond his orders. I have not been here long enough to form an opinion worth anything, but the opinion of others seems to be that Weyler is by no means unlikely to give trouble. He professes to be a Liberal and has some backing in the Liberal party, and he has the reputation in the army of being the only officer who sees that his men are paid, so that he has a considerable following among the troops.

The Boer War was running its course and, in January, 1901, Durand wrote:

The Foreign Secretary at his last reception spoke to me in a manner which rather surprised me, about affairs in South Africa. He began with the remark that Kruger was ill, and that although no one wished him any evil, yet everyone must recognize that it would not be a loss to humanity if he were to die. The Marquis de Aguilar then went on to speak strongly about the iniquity of continuing a perfectly hopeless war. He derided the pessimist notices in the Spanish papers about the Boer incursions into Cape Colony, and said every sensible man knew there could be but one end to the business, and, whatever his sympathies, every humane man must wish now for the submission of the Boers. Something he said gave me an opportunity of referring to Kruger's long preparation for war with us, and the belief of the Boers that they could drive us out of Africa. He asked many questions, and said that public opinion on the Continent was utterly misinformed on the subject, and that it would be well worth while to let the truth be known as far as possible.

The question of the defences of Gibraltar, which, raised by Mr. Gibson Bowles, had aroused deep interest in England, also excited at least equal interest in Spain. As a nation we are sometimes slow at grasping the point of view of other nations, and Durand puts it clearly:

The fact is, I think, that we do not quite realize in England what Gibraltar is to the Spaniards. We are accustomed to regard it as a portion of our Empire. The Spaniards look upon it as a piece of Spanish soil and our presence there is a constant irritant to them.

Moreover they think we have designs on the mainland, and will make the defences of Gibraltar a pretext for further encroachment. It all seems odd to us, no doubt, and unreasonable, but if the Spaniards had established a big naval base at the Land's End, and were in the habit of cruising about our coasts with a dominant fleet, I expect we should be duly suspicious too.

During the summer months the heat at Madrid becomes intolerable, and the Court and *Corps Diplomatique* sought cool retreats. Durand took a villa

at Zarauz, a little village about fifteen miles from San Sebastian. It is real country and beautiful. The mountains come right down to the sea and the views are fine. The surf is generally heavy.

There are fine forests of chestnut and oak and beech on the steep mountain-sides. The climate is moist and warm with much rain. The staple food is maize and the fruit is good, especially the nectarines, which an American girl recently described to me as "peaches without the whiskers."

Among the local inhabitants who visited the British representative was an old friar who demanded a subscription for his monastery. Upon Durand pointing out that it was hard to expect Protestants to subscribe to a Roman Catholic institution, the friar replied that the monks made a special point of praying for the conversion of the heretical English.

After holding the post for a year Durand gives his opinion about the feeling in Spain, in a letter to Lord Northbrook :

You are quite right in supposing that our action during the late war made us unpopular here. I think we are more disliked than the Americans. It is generally felt that nothing but our attitude and our fleet prevented the Continental powers from intervening to save Spain, and it is only natural that this should be bitterly resented. Personally I have found the Spaniards most correct and pleasant, but the feeling in the country against us is strong. I need hardly say that, after the outcry in England against General Weyler's proceedings in Cuba, all the abominable calumnies about our

troops in South Africa are greedily swallowed here. This is only natural.

A year later there was a movement in certain quarters in favour of an Anglo-Spanish *entente*, and Durand writes :

With regard to this, it is well to remember in the first place that though, for various reasons, we are not liked in Spain, we are undoubtedly much feared. There has been in Spain, ever since the days of Drake, perhaps longer, a dread of the English, and it is keener now than it ever was, for Spain is weaker and we are stronger than ever before. "The most powerful nation in the world" is what we are called, even by the newspapers most hostile to us. Spaniards feel that their remaining colonies are at our mercy, as also their seaports ; and they regard our alliance with the Portuguese, whom they dislike and despise, as a standing menace to them. They say it can have no advantage for us except to secure us a good base for an advance into Spain.

The result of all this suspicion and fear is that many Spaniards look to France for protection against us, in spite of the warnings of history. But many others quote the old couplet *Con todo el mundo la guerra. La paz con Inglaterra.*[1] It would, I believe, be a great relief to them all if they could once be convinced that, for the future, they were secure from any aggression on our part. Though Spain possesses no navy worth mentioning, and only a small army, she has a commanding geographical position, fine harbours, a certain amount of power as against Gibraltar, a population of eighteen millions from which excellent troops could be raised, and a high-spirited young King who seems to take a keen interest in everything connected with the army. Spain might prove a serious addition to the forces arrayed against us, and she might be of considerable help to us if she were on our side.

Another question, in which Spain was—and still is—deeply interested is that of Morocco, and in the summer of 1903 Durand writes :

The very strong feeling which all Spaniards have about Morocco, and the conviction that France is determined sooner or later, if possible, to make herself supreme in that country, give us a powerful lever if we wish to bring Spain over to our side, or prevent her attaching herself to France. In regard to Morocco it is French aggression she dreads, not English aggression. And she would do much to

[1] "War with all the world, but peace with England."

keep Morocco *in statu quo*—hoping against hope that some day she may be able to realize her never abandoned dream of an African Empire. I believe that if we could devise some means of meeting her wishes in this particular, we could gain a strong hold upon her.

It is of course difficult under present conditions to promise Spain any definite portion of African territory. She is quite unfit to occupy Morocco, or any considerable tract of country beyond her existing possessions, even supposing that Morocco were to break up. And she knows she is unfit. She hopes to have a fleet and a better army before many years have passed, and she thinks she will then be in a position to assert herself once more; but she is well aware that, as matters stand, it would be folly for her to undertake extensive operations beyond the Straits. The only offer that we could make to her, so far as I can see, is the offer of support in the future, binding ourselves not to come to any agreement with France for the settlement of the question over her head, provided that she reciprocated, and undertaking that we will, in the case of a break-up, insist upon her getting a fair share of territory or "influence" over territory. She would, I suppose, undertake in return to leave the country open to our trade.

I fear we should in reality be doing her no service if we established her across the Straits. She would never make the country pay, and, not to speak of minor troubles, she would always be in danger of trouble with France. Possibly some of her statesmen have recognized this. But if she wants an African empire it is not perhaps our business to think for her.

The course of events has proved—and is still proving—the fundamental soundness of Durand's views on this important question.

It is of some interest to read Durand's considered views on the Diplomatic Service:

I do not regard the life as a fine or wholesome one. There is practically no work or responsibility until a man becomes a Minister, which he may never do. At all events until a man is forty, he may expect to spend his life in copying dispatches, writing up registers, deciphering telegrams, and generally performing the duties which a subordinate clerk would perform in India. We have no clerks at all. The necessary consequence is that the service is inefficient. My predecessor here[1] used to say that the fact of a man having gone

[1] Sir Drummond Wolff.

through the mill was in itself enough to make him unfit for promotion to the rank of Minister, and that certainly every Ambassador should be taken from outside. This was an exaggeration, but Lord Dufferin also used to tell me that the system worked very badly. Besides the want of responsibility, and the idleness—for the services have as a rule very little even of the kind of work I have mentioned—there is the effect on a man belonging from his youth to a corps which is socially petted and spoilt. There are some thoroughly good and capable fellows in the service, as there always will be in a body of English gentlemen, but it is in spite of the training, the whole tendency of which is to turn out a conceited and undisciplined set of men, given to gossip, and inclined to attach large importance to little things. Then there is the drawback that a diplomat spends all his life out of his own country and among foreigners. This is not pleasant, and though it has its advantages it does not, I think, on the whole improve a man's character. Again, even if a man climbs to the highest rung of this ladder, and becomes an Ambassador, he must not expect to have the chance of doing big things. He will be a Grand Cross and a Privy Councillor, and all the rest of it, but most of his work will be of a trivial nature. The days of the great Elchis are over, and for a man who is really ambitious, I mean ambitious of power for good, this is a very doubtful service to choose.[1]

Durand spent three happy and successful years at Madrid, where he was respected and liked. Upon the sudden death of Sir Michael Herbert, he was offered the Embassy at Washington, which he accepted; and said good-bye with much regret to the many friends he had made in Spain. The valedictory notice by the Madrid correspondent of *The Times* ran:

When Sir Mortimer Durand first came here as Ambassador, the general sentiments of the Spanish people were distinctly anti-English. The events of the Transvaal War, the alliance with Portugal, the uncertainty as to England's attitude in Morocco, to mention only the most important obstacles in the way of good-fellowship, one after another tended to aggravate the longstanding distrust of England in this country. Sir Mortimer Durand must frequently have felt that his path was strewn with thorns. He has had constant need

[1] I am informed that the system complained of has recently been modified, and that secretaries no longer do clerks' work, but have responsible duties entrusted to them.

of that grave urbanity and dignified tact which all who have been brought into contact with him know to be of the essence of the man. The task set for him here, not so much by events as by situations, has required the most delicate handling. His manner of comporting himself may be sufficiently indicated by contrasting the state of things at his coming with the situation as he leaves it. Sir Mortimer Durand's successor will find few traces of hostility to England left. On the contrary, many influential people are at present in favour of an alliance with Great Britain.

CHAPTER XX

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICA[1]

People talk of democracy not fighting. Was there ever any finer fighting since the world began than in the American war? Think how they set their teeth and stuck to it on both sides—Lincoln and Davis, and Grant and Sherman, and Jackson and Lee, and the hundreds of thousands of men in the blue and grey who fell into line as the war went on. The fighting blood was just as strong in them as it was in their ancestors two hundred years ago. It warms my heart to read of them all, with their English names and English speech and English ways and dogged English pluck, and I feel as proud of the Stars and Stripes as I do of the Union Jack

—From "Helen Treveryan," by DURAND.

THE Embassy at Washington had been the goal of Durand's ambition for many years. In a letter to Mrs. Rivett-Carnac, dated December, 1895, at a time when peace and war between Great Britain and America hung in the balance, he wrote:

To us all here, Americans and English alike, it seems monstrous. As our American clergyman said at the service to-day: "We Christian men must pray this thing down."

I wish Lord Salisbury would send me to Washington. I know I could get on with these people, and it would be a grand work to bring England and America together—the grandest work an Englishman could do for his country.

Durand had, of course, no previous experience of America, but his success both at Tehran and at Madrid marked him out for further promotion. The fact that he was a barrister-at-law was also of special advantage in dealing with American Cabinet Ministers, most of whom are lawyers. The preliminary notices in the American Press referred to this qualification, as constituting a strong recommendation from the British point of view. Moreover,

[1] This and three following chapters have been read by Lord Lansdowne, by Mr. Justice Eve, and by Sir Maurice Low, to whom I would express my grateful thanks.

the fact that Durand was the first British official of ambassadorial rank to be appointed to Washington[1] flattered American susceptibilities and ensured him an especially warm welcome. As one notice ran: "This appointment will give a new rank to the Washington assignment [*sic*] in the diplomatic service."

No British Ambassador landed in America with warmer feelings towards its inhabitants than Durand. When Minister at Tehran he initiated the practice of inviting the American colony to meet the British at a New Year's dinner and a ball, to which members of no other nation were invited, the idea being to make it a family party. Moreover, by his speeches on these occasions, which met with the warmest response, by his writings and in other ways, he proved his devoted attachment to the ideal of the two great kindred nations working together in the interests of civilization and progress, at a time when such views were not commonly held on either side of the Atlantic. As he so often did, he took the long view. He was also exceptionally well read in American history, and had a strong feeling for Longfellow.

Durand reached New York at the end of November, 1903. His first impression was:

> New York strikes one as a town of broad streets, and has some fine buildings. The approach by the river towards sunset is picturesque, the very tall "sky-scrapers" looking well in the mist and smoke.
>
> The newspaper reporters hunted me all day and late at night, but were very civil and complimentary. One of them wrote that I had a smile that would melt an ice-floe, which was kind, if not exactly accurate. They tried hard to make me say things about the Alaska Award which might hurt the Canadians, and published one or two remarks which I never made, but nothing, I hope, which can do any harm.

Of the journey to Washington he notes:

> The country looked rather unkempt in comparison with England, but there were fine pieces of scenery here and there, notably the great sheets of water about Baltimore.

[1] Lord Pauncefote, the first Ambassador, was promoted *in situ*.

His first visit was paid to Mr. John Hay, the Foreign Secretary:

Before I was dressed on the morning after my arrival, came a note from Hay asking me to see him before eleven, as there was a Cabinet Council. I went over at once to the State Department and was ushered into a long room hung with numerous pictures of prominent Americans. Hay came in and received me pleasantly. He looks about fifty, with a nice face and manner, and a greyish short beard. He assured me of a warm welcome from President Roosevelt and people, and congratulated me on the friendly feeling now existing, and the want of disturbing elements. He asked me to send at once the speech I intended to make to the President. I did so in the afternoon, and meanwhile he wrote that the President would receive me next day at 2.30.

About 2 o'clock the President's A.D.C., Colonel Symons, arrived in one of the White House carriages, a plain landau with negro coachman and footmen, nothing to distinguish it from any private carriage. We drove over to the White House, and leaving our coats in the hall were taken into a room opposite the hall door. There we found Hay in frock-coat and grey trousers. Soon afterwards the President came in similarly dressed, and I bowed and read my speech, and presented my letter of credence.

He answered shortly, in a strong voice, with a certain suppressed vehemence, pronouncing his words clearly, with emphasis, and showing a double row of level white teeth. He is not tall, but broad and square-shouldered, and gives the impression of force and energy. When he had finished, he shook hands warmly, and said, "I am very glad indeed to see you here. I knew 'Mungo' Herbert very well, and he was a great friend of mine, but I am sure you will prove a worthy successor, even to him. I have had many letters about you, all in the same sense. I must see you again soon. I want to talk to you about many things, from Afghanistan to big game." With that he turned short round, shook hands with the staff, turned again at the door and bowed quickly, and walked down the passage.

I then returned with Symons. It was cold, and a little fine snow was falling. We talked about the Civil War and other things. I remarked that the President looked young. He said, "He is young, only forty-three. It is very young to have got where he is. And what is more, he will keep his position. He is almost certain to be re-elected."

The first function that Durand attended was of a distinctly novel character to him.

To-morrow for my sins I have to go to the Gridiron Club. The Secretary came to see me and pressed till I agreed, holding out as an inducement that I should have five hours of it. And I did, 7.30 to 12.45. It was a unique and amusing performance, songs and farce of all sorts, and roasting of all the prominent men present—Hanna, Gorman, McClellan and others, who all took it most good-naturedly.

Finally they made me speak. The President, Coolidge,[1] on whose right I was sitting, said Pauncefote had announced at a Gridiron dinner his appointment to the Embassy, and it was fitting that I should make my debut at a Gridiron dinner too. Thereupon the whole audience, over two hundred, got up and sang "God save the King" most enthusiastically. I thanked them, and my short speech was very well received, especially when I declined to act on the advice of the man at the Metropolitan Club always to "say something humorous," on the ground that the last thing an American audience would ever expect from an Englishman would be a sense of humour. The house rose at that. I finished by saying I had told Ella before leaving England that if all Americans were as warm-hearted and friendly as those we had known, we were going not to a new post but to a new home. This evoked a storm of cheers, and when I had thanked them again they all got up once more and sang "For he's a jolly good fellow." So went my first attempt to speak to Americans. I hope it was not a failure. I had many congratulations, but I was very nervous at first.

During the first week a round of calls took up much time. An entry on this subject runs :

Called on General Crozier and asked the old darkie servant whether Mrs. Crozier was in. "No, sah. Gone to heaven, sah."

Durand started riding again, and visited the various places of interest in the mornings, but every night he was invited to dinners, generally including oysters, terrapin, canvas-back duck and crab salad on the bill of fare, which made him feel alarm for his figure.

[1] Louis A. Coolidge.

Another important function was the dinner given in his honour by the Pilgrims' Society. The time fixed was 7 p.m., and at the identical hour the Pilgrims in London also met together under the presidency of Durand's old chief and life-long friend Lord Roberts. By a special arrangement, that was made for the first time on this occasion, a direct line had been run into the two rooms, so that messages were freely exchanged across the width of the Atlantic, before the guests sat down to their respective banquets. Durand made a good speech, referring to the tradition of friendship for America which he had inherited from his father, who had been an admirer and friend of the American missionary Judson, the "Apostle of Burma." He also referred to the Irish question and

> hoped that they would be our friends if only because an Irishman controlled our foreign policy, an Irishman was at the head of our army and an Irishman was in command of the Channel Fleet, in the persons of Lord Lansdowne, Lord Roberts and Lord Charles Beresford.

It is of special interest to note that Woodrow Wilson, at that time President of Princeton, made the closing speech.

Durand's speeches at the Gridiron Club, the Pilgrims' Club, the Lotus Club and the Transatlantic Club of Philadelphia were all received most favourably by the Press. Although he was never a ready speaker, he impressed his audiences with his deep knowledge, his width of outlook and sincerity. He was delighted with the cordiality of his reception and wrote to Lord Lansdowne:

> It would really be impossible to imagine anything more warm-hearted and outspoken than the welcome I have had. It reminds me of the way I was received when I first went out to India, where everyone knew my people. Unpleasant things must happen, no doubt, but so far there has been nothing of the kind, and it is difficult to believe that the goodwill towards England is not widespread and sincere. I think there can be no doubt, in spite of the invariable refusal to co-operate with us, of the great change of feeling towards

England. Many prominent men have spoken to me in the strongest way about it, especially about the effect produced by our attitude in the Spanish War. I hope the Hudson Bay business may not upset our good relations, or something else of the kind.

Among the letters of congratulation that caused Durand special pleasure was one from the Secretary to the Board of Foreign Missions. In reply he wrote:

I feel that I owe American missionaries a debt of gratitude which I can never discharge. They did more for me and my English people in Persia than I can possibly explain to the Board. They gave us our Sunday services, comforted our sick and dying, and buried our dead. We went to them for every kind of help, with the certainty of receiving from them at all times the most warm-hearted, self-sacrificing kindness. Only those who have lived in such far-away countries know what that means. Your Board may, and should, be proud of its missionaries, for a more devoted, and at the same time a more broad-minded, tolerant set of men it would be hard to find.

Durand addressed more than one missionary meeting in America and spoke from first-hand knowledge of the excellent work of American missionaries in the East.

He also visited Philadelphia, where he was entertained by the Transatlantic Society with the hospitality for which the city is renowned, and on this occasion the degree of LL.D. was bestowed on him by the University of Pennsylvania.

Lady Durand and her daughter arrived in time for Christmas, and were soon taking part in the social round. For a while his wife's health remained good, but the asthma and insomnia returned and, although Miss Durand worked very hard, the Embassy suffered from the ill-health of its hostess, which prevented the creation of intimate social relations with the White House and in other quarters.

The domestic staff gave constant trouble. In a letter dated nearly a year after his arrival, Durand writes:

Servants are impossible in this country, and make one's life a burden. We have four going at this moment at a few days' notice,

and in defiance of their contracts. That is really the explanation of the American hotel life. English servants either go back or get spoilt in a few months. I shall have sent five home next month—in one year—nearly £200 all told. It really is very trying. One young footman, who had been a month in the country, was caught by the butler sliding down the banisters into the hall. Upon being rebuked, he retorted: "Go to hell. This is a free country." A lady told me the other day that her coachman remarked to her when returning from a dinner: "Well, you've come at last. What you *gain* by swapping grub nights I can't see."

On Christmas Day the staff dined here and we went on to a dance. Very amusing and friendly and noisy. There was a Christmas tree with presents for all. Root, the War Secretary, received a toy cannon. He then made me a speech and presented me with a parcel which turned out to be a white dove with a leaf in its mouth. Speech and present were much applauded.

A few days later the entry runs:

Dinner with the Lodges. I am not sure about his goodwill towards us. Hale and MacVeagh were strong against our expenditure on the army and fleet. The latter accuses us of being "crazy" on naval expenditure and of forcing other nations to do likewise. Hale said that our fleet was of no use except to bully small nations.

Dining with the Hays presented a pleasant contrast:

Hay told us a story of a friend of his who visited a small township out west—Plantagenet City. The hotel-keeper told him it was going to be a great metropolis and so on. He then pointed with pride to the hill-side. "We are rather proud of that, Captain." "What is it?" my friend inquired. "That is our cemetery. There are nine men in it already, and none of them died a natural death, except one, and he was poisoned by his wife."

At Washington Durand met two outstanding figures, both naval officers, who deeply interested him. Of the victor of Manila he writes:

Talked after dinner with Dewey, pleasant but not very strikingly clever. He told me the Manila affair was easy. He found on the Spanish admiral's table a copy of a telegram to Madrid saying that the American fleet of nine ships was coming next day and ending with

the words: "I shall be prepared for them." But he spent the day at a party given by his wife some miles away and a long drive round the bay, returning in the small hours. When the American fleet arrived at daybreak nothing was ready and the officers were on shore. The admiral afterwards appealed to Dewey to say he had fought bravely, which he did, changing his flag to another ship when his own sank.

Of another great sailor he writes:

Mahan is a tall slight man with bald head and white moustache and thin, clear-cut features. He talks as he writes, clearly and to the point. After dinner we sat together and I told him how much I had enjoyed and learnt from his books. I said that I supposed he was tired of being told what a revelation they had been to us English. His answer was, "Well, one can be told those things without getting tired. I once began a conversation with a lady I had not seen for a good many years by remarking how wonderfully young she was looking, and she said, 'If you're going to talk like that, I guess you can go on all night.'"

We had much interesting conversation about Nelson and Trafalgar. He is an enthusiastic admirer of Nelson and said a man could not write a good biography without being an enthusiastic admirer of the man whose life he was writing. "I don't believe an impartial biographer can ever be a good one. At least he must have strong personal sympathy for the man."

He told me that it was quite by chance that he came upon the idea of the influence of sea power. He was on duty somewhere, and tired of the routine of sea life, when he was asked to give some lectures on naval matters. He agreed, and then began to think about what he was going to say. Reading and thinking, he was suddenly struck by the fact that Hannibal had to make the long march round by Spain and the Alps to attack Rome when Carthage was so close. This was the germ of the whole conception in his mind. He had never thought before of the influence of sea power. This led him on to the Napoleonic wars and other phases of the question.

Some months later Durand again refers to Mahan:

Captain John Barnes told me that Mahan had been a pupil of his when he was an instructor at Annapolis. Mahan was a quiet young fellow of no particular mark. Afterwards when Mahan wanted to publish his first work, "The Influence of Sea Power on History," I think the publishers refused it unless Mahan would

find $2,500. This Mahan "didn't have," so he applied to Barnes, who had meanwhile retired from the Navy and been "rather successful" in business. Barnes looked over some proofs or MSS., but he was busy, and the preface seemed dull, and he had many business affairs at the moment which were causing him some anxiety, and in fine he said he did not care about the venture. "I never regretted anything so much in my life." He was very proud of Mahan's having first understood the real foundation of English power. He told me the Japanese Ambassador sent him a complete translation in Japanese of Mahan's works, and told him they were supplied to the library of every ship in the Japanese Navy.

Durand had studied the campaigns of the American Civil War deeply and was a great admirer of "Stonewall" Jackson. Upon this becoming known, he was invited to visit the battle-fields as the guest of the War Department and under the guidance of officers who had fought in the various actions. For instance, he writes:

Nicholson, who fought at Gettysburg himself and is in charge of the field, has an old Confederate, Robbins, to help him. Both were most interesting. Robbins was one of six brothers who fought for the Confederates. Four were killed, and the other two severely wounded, one five times. He was at Bull Run when Lee gave Jackson his famous nickname, and heard the words.

Later he visits Virginia:

I spent two nights at Winchester, seeing much of the McGuires. Dr. McGuire is brother of Jackson's famous doctor and friend. He drove me out to Jackson's first field, Kernstown, and other places. Tucker and the Fergusons and I also went to see one of the Federal forts, still very well preserved above the town. Winchester is like an old English town, with many colonial buildings; among others Washington's office when he was working for Lord Fairfax. It changed hands seventy to eighty times during the war. The Confederate feeling is very strong, and Jackson's name is idolized. At parting McGuire gave me a button cut from Jackson's coat after his death.

One very interesting visit was to old Mr. Grahame, the clergyman in whose house Jackson spent the winter of 1861–62. Being in the very rooms where Jackson lived was strange and impressive to

me. How little I expected a year ago that I should ever see them. I heard many anecdotes of Jackson, who is laughed at and worshipped by all. The Superintendent of the Institute was trying to get him removed as inefficient when the war broke out. One Ross, who was in his class, told me he never understood his own lectures and could not explain anything. Pogne, his chief of artillery, was there, a keen, soldierly man, and another, Moore I think, who said he fired the first gun ever fired under Jackson's orders. As an instance of Jackson's earnestness and want of humour, Ross said he refused to let the officers' wives come to see them on the ground that "it had a bad effect on the privates."

In his notes Durand refers repeatedly to the intense bitterness still felt in the South, mainly owing to the "maddening negro domination to which the North subjected them." Even the tragedy of the Great War has failed to heal this wound, as I found somewhat to my surprise when I visited America as Lowell lecturer in 1923.

It is interesting to note that Colonel Henderson's "Life of Stonewall Jackson" was regarded by Roosevelt "as the best book on the war and perhaps the best military history ever written." This was also the view of two generals who fought on opposite sides and told Durand that they "never understood the battles they fought in until they read it."

Durand wrote in May, 1904:

The session of Congress is over, and the Presidential campaign in full swing. There seems to be little doubt that Roosevelt will be elected. He has no one against him in his own party, and the Democrats are divided. He is said to be an honest man, and not now ill-disposed towards England, but his friend and constant companion is Lodge, and Lodge, though personally civil, does not show good feeling towards us. You may have seen his speech about our claims, which, though admittedly good, he blocked. The Senate is notoriously opposed to Hay, who is a gentleman and very friendly. Of Roosevelt himself I have no personal knowledge. I have never yet had a talk with him. He is busy and he is nervous about offending the Irish and Germans, which may possibly make him fight shy of me. On the two or three occasions when we have met in public he has been civil

enough, and he has told me and my wife that he wants me to ride with him, but he has never arranged it, and I know no more of him than I did after my first audience.

Roosevelt won by a large majority in an election in which "not a word was said by either side against England. This is a very cheering sign of the times and has been much noticed in America." Hay was reappointed to the Foreign Department. Durand's entry runs:

When I said I had been very glad to see the President's announcement that he was to remain as Secretary of State for the next four years, he answered, "That was a characteristic act on the President's part. He made the announcement to the newspapers without ever consulting me. Of course I cannot give him a *démenti*, and I must stay on for the present, but I expect that, long before 1908, I shall be twanging a golden harp in another country." Once before Hay spoke to me as if he did not expect to live long, and his brother's death has saddened him. I hope he may be wrong, for I like him personally, and I feel that the loss of his restraining influence would be a serious thing for us. Roosevelt is impulsive, not to say aggressive, and he was at one time anything but friendly to England.[1] His great triumph in the elections will hardly tend to make him more conciliatory, and Lodge is always at his elbow ready to make mischief.

Shortly afterwards the entry runs:

Since I wrote I have, to my sorrow, seen something more of the President. He invited me to lunch, was very pleasant, and asked me to come back later for a walk. We drove out to the Rock Creek, a wooded valley with a stream running through it, and he then plunged down the *khud*, and made me struggle through bushes and over rocks for two hours and a half, at an impossible speed, till I was so done that I could hardly stand. His great delight is rock climbing, which is my weak point. I disgraced myself completely, and my arms and shoulders are still stiff with dragging myself up by roots and ledges. At one place I fairly stuck, and could not get over the top till he caught me by the collar and hauled at me. He is certainly a "strenuous" man all through. He was

[1] In "Theodore Roosevelt and his Times," by J. B. Bishop (p. 79), a letter of Roosevelt's, written in 1898, runs: "I should myself like to shape our foreign policy with a purpose ultimately of driving off this continent every European Power. I would begin with Spain and, in the end, would take all other European nations, including England."

dripping with sweat, his clothes frayed by the rocks and bushes and covered with dirt, but he was as happy as a schoolboy. We talked chiefly about the war and shooting. He greatly admires the Japanese, and wants them to win, but not in too crushing a manner. He did almost all the talking, to my great relief, for I had no breath to spare.

In the summer, owing to its trying heat, Washington is deserted. Durand, to whom the turmoil of Newport, the fashionable seaside resort, was distasteful, rented a house at Lenox.

It is a lovely place in the Berkshire hills, rather like Wales, a grassy valley, meadows bright with buttercups and ox-eye daisies and forget-me-nots, run up into wooded hills. Woods of pine and maple and chestnut and other trees, full of wild flowers and birds. Beautiful trout streams. Jo and I ride every morning. To-day it is cloudless, with a soft northerly breeze, and quite cool, about 60°. People very kind and friendly, sending flowers and invitations.

The Durands thoroughly enjoyed life at Lenox. The residents were charming and they made many friends. Durand first began to learn golf during this summer, while he played a good deal of cricket with marked success. The American newspapers devoted much space to his prowess with the bat, the headlines of great size running "Ambassador Victorious. British Lion makes American Eagle fold its Wings." Durand also took part in various gymkhanas, winning the tent-pegging more than once.

Shortly after reaching Lenox he writes:

On June 13th I went to New York and stopped at the Manhattan on Taft's invitation. He insisted on paying my bill and my fare to West Point next day. I was received with overwhelming honour, a salute of 19 guns, cavalry escort, cadets paraded. Then had to take the salute at a review. The boys drilled perfectly—march past, even at the double, almost like a wall—as smart as ever I saw. General Mills and his wife very kind. Weather cool and fine. The uniform is old-fashioned and quaint—grey coatee with tails, white crossbelt, white trousers, dark shako. The place is beautifully situated on a height over a bend of the Hudson. A chain is still shown which was stretched across the river in the Revolutionary war to stop our ships going up. The view up the river is very fine. There is a fine grassy parade ground. Next day, after another

parade, the outgoing class received their diplomas—fine boys, rather rougher-looking than ours, but smart. Of the 120 who passed out all but four had British names.

In the autumn Durand visited the Niagara Falls, which he considered to be "much spoilt by advertisement and ornamentation." He then went on to Chicago, where he was shown the University buildings with their imitations of Magdalen Tower and Christ Church common room. He was not spared the stockyards, which he found

horrid but interesting. Five million hogs and a million bullocks killed every year—a hog every two working seconds. Chicago is a big rambling place—splendour and squalor combined.

Upon returning to Washington, Durand attended the unveiling of the statue of Frederick the Great that the Kaiser had presented to America.

President made longish speech, not bad, but looked as if he were going to shake little "Specky"[1] in his Hussar jacket and busby and plume. Dwelt much on composite stock of American people. Remarks about Frederick's battles not very pleasant for Russian, Austrian and French Ambassadors who had no wish to be present. We all went in plain clothes, to the indignation of Americans, who are always down on Ambassadors.

Shortly after this ceremony, Durand signed an Arbitration Treaty with Mr. Hay, who had already concluded a similar treaty with France. When Mr. Choate, the American Ambassador in London, had inquired whether Great Britain was prepared to negotiate such a treaty, Lord Lansdowne's prompt reply had been "That goes without saying," whereupon Mr. Choate remarked that many things "went without saying" between Great Britain and the United States, and one was that both countries were ready to settle their differences peaceably. Unfortunately these treaties, although they did not include subjects "affecting the vital interests, independence, or the honour of the two contracting parties," were rejected by the Senate, to the intense disgust of Mr. Hay, who said to Durand:

[1] Baron Speck von Sternberg, the German Ambassador.

"A treaty entering the Senate is like a bull going into the arena. No one can say just how or when the final blow will fall, but one thing is certain, it will never leave the arena alive." It was significant that the opposition to these treaties was headed by Henry Cabot Lodge, who was the strongest supporter of President Roosevelt.

Durand had now been a year at Washington and he took the opportunity for summing up his position. He found to his dismay that he could not live on the pay of the post and maintain a proper establishment. The fact was that £6,500 was an utterly inadequate salary, and the outfit allowances must also have been equally inadequate, as Durand mentions in a letter that the moves to Madrid and Washington cost him £4,000 beyond these allowances. He represented the matter of his salary to the Foreign Office, which added £800 to his emoluments, but this was merely a temporary help, and so strong was the case that his successor was given £10,000. In these circumstances Durand was obliged to stop his insurance payments, which constituted practically the sole provision he was making for his family; and this naturally much concerned him.

Apart from his wife's bad health, which he felt very deeply, and these serious financial troubles, Durand was delighted with America and the Americans. He had made many friends among the best people as opposed to the smart set. It is true that he had been told that Roosevelt found him hard to know, and also that he was considered to be somewhat exclusive. On the other hand he received constant proofs that he was appreciated. An American whom he had known in Persia wrote:

> You seem to have "taken America by storm," as a man in New York City expressed it to me in speaking of you and your work in this country. I have heard a lot of splendid things said about you since I came home. My fellow-countrymen think you are the best man ever appointed to the post you occupy.

Finally he heard from Lord Lansdowne that he was considered to be a success in perhaps the most difficult post that is in the gift of the Foreign Office.

CHAPTER XXI

WASHINGTON IN 1905

"I can remember when it was quite fashionable to attack England in the Senate. Now in our secret sittings you hear nothing but goodwill. The Spanish War converted the last of us."

A Senator of the Middle West to DURAND.

DURAND was most anxious to establish more intimate relations with the President. He therefore invited Cecil Spring-Rice,[1] for whom he had the deepest regard, to visit him early in 1905. Spring-Rice had been President Roosevelt's best man, and a warm friendship existed between them. In February the diary runs :

Just returned from a talk with President and Spring-Rice. Spring-Rice and I sat on the sofa by the fire in the "red parlour" to the south side of the fire-place, while the President, after putting two logs on the fire, curled himself up in an arm-chair in front of it, one leg under him, and drank apollinaris and talked—very freely.

As I was putting on my coat in the anteroom, the President came in arm in arm with Spring-Rice and exclaimed that the latter had told him that Mrs. L—— said she had been so much interested in the statue at Rome of the wolf suckling Romeo and Juliet. She had also commented on a friend's appearance with the remark: "Poor girl, she looks so pale and carnivorous."

In March, Durand paid a visit to the President on the day before his inauguration. Its object was to hand him a personal letter from King Edward, in which His Majesty offered him his congratulations on his election, and expressed his goodwill to him and to

[1] Sir Cecil Spring-Rice had served under Durand at Tehran. He was Ambassador at Washington during the Great War.

the American people. Accompanying this was a miniature of Hampden which was a personal gift from His Majesty to President Roosevelt. Durand's letter to Lord Lansdowne ran :

He said he should value the miniature very highly and considered it a singularly appropriate gift. He spoke warmly about the tone of the letter, which he said differed in that respect from any that he had ever received from a crowned head. He is sending his answer by Henry White, who will tell you how sincerely pleased he was. There can be no doubt about this. The letter will, I feel sure, have an excellent effect.

Regarding the miniature he said he would speak to Hay, as he was not sure what course to adopt. "I mean to stick to it," he said, "whatever happens, but I think I had better say nothing about it as Congress might refuse permission," and he asked me to take the greatest care that no one got to know anything. He seemed really anxious on this point, which on the eve of his triumphal inauguration struck me as rather pathetic.

After talking about the King's letter, he went on to assure me of his firm resolve to stand in with us. He said with a laugh, "I know 'Springy' thinks I am inclined to fall under the influence of the German Emperor, but he is quite wrong. I like the Emperor very much in a way, but I don't trust him, and am not in the least affected by the ridiculous messages he makes 'Specky' bring me. I have told 'Specky' his fears of an attack by England are utter nonsense, and 'Specky' is half ashamed of them himself. You need never be the least afraid that I shall take the Kaiser seriously." I tried to assure him that Spring-Rice did not take the view he supposed, but it is never easy to get in a word when he is started. He said a good deal more on the same subject.

He told me the Emperor had been gravely alarmed at the idea of a Franco-Russo-Anglo-Japanese alliance against him, also that the Emperor wished him to believe that the French and Russians had vainly tried to bring Germany into a coalition against England. He hinted that England attached too much importance to the German naval preparations, and said he would like to see Germany more friendly towards us, but that she was not so unfriendly as we imagined.

He also said he had told "Specky" that Germany had only herself to thank for any hostility on the part of England, as her behaviour to us in the Boer War had been unpardonable. He spoke bitterly about the Senate and its attitude. On the whole, however, he

seemed in good spirits, and he was very pleasant to me. As we parted he said, "So far as my descent goes I suppose I am hardly an Anglo-Saxon, but I firmly believe that our two countries must stand together."

The inauguration [Durand writes] was not an impressive ceremonial. We went to the Capitol at 11, and the Ambassadors had seats on the floor of the Senate, facing the President, who sat under the Chair. After the swearing in, we went outside, and sat near a rough semicircular platform, covered with a little spotted green carpet, from which the President delivered his address. Most of it was inaudible, blown away by the wind. After a long struggle for carriages we got home, then Jo and I went to the Review. We had seats on a stand in the White House grounds. The very small number of regular troops and the extreme sobriety of their uniforms made the march past compare unfavourably as a spectacle with European parades—still more with Indian—but the men were good. The horses were poor. A curious feature was the presence of State Governors riding by in black dress coats and stove-pipe hats.

Altogether the Inauguration was not an imposing sight, but there was a certain pathos about it—the President with all his wonderful popularity surrounded by the Senators who had humiliated him, saying openly, "Teddy is getting too bumptious. He wants taking down a peg."

The President had asked Durand, at the visit already mentioned, if he thought of taking leave to England, and, upon receiving a reply in the affirmative, suggested that he should go in May, when he himself would be absent for six weeks on a bear shoot. He added, "I shall leave Taft sitting on the lid." Durand acted upon this request, and when he left Washington at the end of April, 1905, *The Times* correspondent wrote:

> The relations between the two Governments were never more cordial, the goodwill on both sides was never more emphatic. To these good relations, both official and personal, Sir Mortimer has contributed his full share. He has won regard and confidence in unstinted measure.

Durand reached England in the first week in May and spent ten very busy days. He was received most

graciously by King Edward. He also saw Lord Lansdowne more than once and wrote in his diary: "He seemed to be entirely satisfied with the position in America. He has evidently taken Roosevelt's measure."

Apart from his official duties, time was found to meet a number of his relations and friends. He also saw his son, who decided to accompany him back to America—and almost missed the train.

I was very thankful to get on board again and be at peace, with all Ella's commissions accomplished. It was a tiring rush and in some ways trying.

A month after Durand's return to Washington,

just as I had got up, a reporter came with a message from the Associated Press asking me for a "tribute" on the death of the Hon. John Hay. He had died suddenly of heart failure shortly after midnight. It is a great loss, and a sad one, for his last year was darkened by the failure of the Arbitration treaties and all the trouble with the Senate. He came to Washington for a few days on his return from Europe, and this, the doctors say, overstrained him. There is no one of his experience and culture to succeed him. He was a thorough gentleman—honest and kindly.

The King wished me to represent him at the funeral and, on the evening of July 4, I started for Cleveland, arriving about 7 in the morning. There was a service in the small chapel, and then we went on to the grave, among the small trees near the Garfield monument. It was all well managed, the cemetery pretty and well kept. Americans do not wear mourning clothes at funerals. All had ordinary grey trousers, coloured ties, no hat-bands, some a crape band on arm. Much talking and even joking. The President and all the Cabinet were at the funeral. Of the diplomats, only the Japanese Secretary.

The question of Mr. Hay's successor was of extreme importance to Durand. He realized clearly enough that there was no American living who possessed the late Foreign Secretary's profound knowledge of foreign affairs. All he hoped for was an official with whom he could work on friendly terms. Consequently, when it was announced

that the new Secretary was Mr. Elihu Root, his relief was intense and he wrote of him :

> As good a choice as the President could have made under the circumstances. I like him particularly.

The Russo-Japanese War was the great world event during Durand's tenure of the Embassy at Washington, and he notes that American feeling was strongly, though not universally, in favour of Japan.

In June, 1904 :

> Roosevelt seemed much pleased at the Japanese successes and hoped they would continue. He said the Russians had brought all their humiliation on themselves and spoke strongly about their duplicity and bluff.

In January, 1905, the President spoke frankly to Durand about the situation and expressed his desire to obtain the views of the British Government, with whom he wished to act in close concord. Upon receiving a summary of the British point of view, he expressed his entire satisfaction with it and declared : "I will keep in the closest touch with England. I consider that our interests in the East are identical."

On March 30, Durand again visited the President, who told him that, according to the Russian Ambassador, the Tsar had decided to continue the war, feeling confident that Russia could exhaust Japan financially. With this view Roosevelt had disagreed, and had strongly advised Russia to make peace, if she did not wish to be expelled entirely from the Pacific coast. The President again renewed the assurances of his earnest desire to act with England.

In June, Roosevelt sent for Durand and gave him a full account of the leading part he had played :

> He told me that he wished me to know the exact course of the recent negotiations. England being the ally of Japan, it was right that we should know all, but he had told no single person except Taft. Hereafter, a month or so hence, he might tell Lodge and one or two others, i.e. everyone.

He said that every step he had taken from the beginning had been taken at the express request of Japan. Before the late naval action, the Japanese Minister had come to him and asked him on the part of the Japanese Government whether he could not sound Russia as to her willingness to meet Japanese plenipotentiaries "without the intervention of any intermediary," this condition being apparently emphasized. He had done so, of course suppressing the fact that the Japanese had spoken to him, but had found that the Russians were "in a state of the most foolish elation" because of Rojestvensky's[1] unopposed arrival in the Eastern seas. They scouted the idea of peace, assuring him that their fleet was so strong as to be certain of destroying the Japanese, or driving them into their harbours, and that the turning-point of the war had come. The Japanese seemed very anxious.

After the naval action, the Japanese Minister came again and pressed him to make another attempt, and he did so, strongly urging the Russian Ambassador to make peace before worse things happened, and asking him to convey to the Tsar the opinions he had expressed. Feeling considerable doubt whether Cassini would really do so, he had afterwards decided to send the American Ambassador in Petersburg direct to the Tsar with a strongly worded message urging him to agree to a meeting between Russian and Japanese plenipotentiaries and offering to advise Japan in the same sense.

The result was that he received through Cassini a curt and peremptory refusal. The Russian Government, Cassini said, desired him to inform the President that they did not wish either for peace or for an offer of mediation. The next day, Meyer having meanwhile seen the Tsar personally, the President received from Meyer a telegram saying that the Tsar agreed to the proposal, and would send plenipotentiaries if the Japanese would do so. Nothing was said about the message of the day before, of which the President believed the Tsar to have been wholly ignorant.

Then came a curious reversal of rôles. Cassini called upon the President and gave him, on the part of the Russian Government, an unqualified assent to his proposal, while the official Russian reply, embodying the Tsar's assent, was worded in an evasive manner,

[1] A friendly critic pressed me to change Durand's spelling of this name, but I retorted by quoting a verse current at the time:

> And after all this an Admiral came,
> A terrible man with a terrible name,
> A name which we all of us know very well
> But no one can speak and no one can spell.

and assented only to " the principle " of the proposal. The President said that altogether he had found the Russians most unsatisfactory in their dealings, " equally tricky and silly."

The last thing they had done, three days ago, I think, was to send Cassini to him with the message that the Tsar looked to him to safeguard " the dignity and interests " of Russia. He said Cassini spoke as if Russia were going into the business as a favour to him. He had lashed out savagely at this, and told Cassini that unless Russia recognized that she was a beaten country, and came into the negotiation prepared to take the consequences of defeat, she had better not come in at all. This seemed to produce a good effect, and the President is now confident that the Russians mean business.

The President has evidently spoken to both the Russians and Japanese, whose attitude he described as " very troublesome at times though less so than the Russians," like a schoolmaster speaking to naughty boys. He is much pleased at the result, and is quite confident that both sides will now come to the point " without further nonsense." Whether he has sufficient grounds for his confidence I cannot judge.

As to the place of meeting, Russia preferred The Hague to Washington, but Japan flatly refused, partly from the feeling that her plenipotentiary would be exposed to unfavourable influences, but chiefly because she held that Russia must meet her half-way. It reminds one of the programme of an Indian durbar—" The Viceroy will meet His Highness in the centre of the carpet "—but it is a natural feeling. After meeting in Washington, the President thinks the plenipotentiaries will go north to some cooler and quieter place.

The President, rather to my relief, seemed quite satisfied with our attitude. I had feared that he might think we had not backed him up strongly enough, but he said our silence was wise and proper, and that if we advised moderation hereafter our advice would come with double force.

He told me Cassini said to him that England was doing all she could to prevent peace—that her object was to keep the war going on so as thoroughly to exhaust both the belligerents " so that Russia should not be a formidable enemy or Japan a formidable ally." The President answered that he felt quite certain England sincerely desired peace, that, apart from considerations of humanity, it must be clear to her that if Russia and Japan were left face to face in Eastern Asia she had little cause to fear aggression on her Indian frontiers or in Persia.

On Thursday, the 3rd August, I went to Oyster Bay to explain

to the President the new treaty with Japan and, if possible, gain his concurrence. He accepted it at once without demur. He said he thought we were quite capable of defending India without the help of Japan, but that of course Russia would now see that any attack was hopeless. He pressed me to induce our Government to urge moderate terms upon Japan.

It appears that Roosevelt had already urged Lord Lansdowne, in June, to exert pressure on the Japanese in the interests of peace, but that he had declined to do so. Later on, early in August, Roosevelt wrote to Whitelaw Reid, the American Ambassador to England, that he had told Durand that " if the British really wished for peace, they would advise the Japs in their own interest to make it."[1] This was evidently the meeting previously referred to.

On August 23, Roosevelt made one more effort through Durand, sending a message that, in his judgment, " every true friend of Japan should tell it that the opinion of the civilized world will not support it in continuing the war merely for the purpose of extorting money from Russia."[2]

Roosevelt considered that the British Government was " foolishly reluctant to advise Japan to be reasonable," and wrote to Whitelaw Reid on September 11:

> I did not get much assistance from the English Government, but I did get indirect assistance, for I learned that they forwarded to Japan my note to Durand, and I think that the signing of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty made Japan feel comparatively safe as to the future.[3]

It appears that Roosevelt either did not realize or that, in his anxiety to secure a personal triumph, he disregarded the delicate position of the British Government in these negotiations. The advice he urged on Japan might be acceptable as coming from the President of the United States, but wholly inadvisable for the British

[1] " Theodore Roosevelt and his Times," by J. B. Bishop, 1, 403.
[2] *Op. cit.*, i, 408. [3] *Op. cit.*, i, 415.

Government to press on her ally. In any case, he was angry that the British did not follow his lead and resented their repeated refusal to do so.

The struggle between the diplomatists raged over an indemnity which the Japanese urged very strongly in one form or another, whereas Witte's position was "not a kopeck. A woman may change her dress, but she remains a woman. So also an indemnity." In the event, the strong pressure exerted by President Roosevelt on both parties finally bore fruit, and Durand was able to note:

On 19th August, after three weeks of discussion and the apparent certainty of a break-down, the Peace Conference ended in coming to terms, the Japanese withdrawing their claim to an indemnity. It was a great surprise to everyone, and a great triumph for Roosevelt, who pressed both sides hard. I believe he was right in urging the Japanese to give up their claim. They would not have got the money, and would have spent many millions in continuing the war, without anything to gain. They did not want Vladivostok, and Russia escapes the supreme humiliation of paying what all the East would have regarded as tribute to an Oriental race. It is better so, and the two are left face to face in Eastern Siberia.

In the summer of 1905, Durand writes of the President:

He seems really troubled about the German Emperor. He said that a year ago he thought the Emperor nothing more than "inconvenient" in his ways, but now thought him really dangerous. He told me he had done his utmost to bring home to the Emperor the folly of an attack on France, telling him that even if the Germans won, which was not certain, they could get no good from it. A French province would be to them what a piece of poisoned meat would be to a dog, and there was really nothing else to gain. And so on. I do not think he was trying to frighten us. He repeated more than once that England had nothing whatever to fear from a war with Germany, which must end entirely to our advantage, and that he had impressed this upon the Emperor. To make sure that what he said was conveyed to the Emperor, he had written personally and had stated in so many words that the result of a war with England

could only be the loss of all the German colonies and probably the destruction of the German fleet. I have no doubt the President wished me to know that the Emperor was contemplating the possibility of war with England, but I feel sure he understands that much as we should regret war we are not in the least afraid of it, or in the mood to be bullied.

The President told me that if Germany developed designs on Holland, he should at once take over and hold in pledge all Dutch possessions in this part of the world, and that he presumed we should do the same in Java and elsewhere. He laughed and said the arrangement would not be temporary. He also told me that Germans talked foolishly of a simultaneous attack on New York and San Francisco, and that American naval officers were incensed against Germany.

The summer was again spent at Lenox, where Durand continued to play cricket:

After a couple of twenties I played on Thursday what was I think the best innings I have ever played—50 not out, without a chance, for "Gentlemen *v.* Players," i.e. Field's eleven against the Lenox Club. We got them out for 53, and then, after losing two wickets, I went in, and old Whittenham and I made a stand till we had collared the bowling. The wicket was good, and rather slow, as I like it, no bumping balls. I have played longer innings, but never I think a more steady one, no flukes. I was cutting with more certainty than usual.

In the autumn of 1905, Prince Louis of Battenberg visited American waters in command of the Cruiser Squadron Division. He arrived some six hours before scheduled time owing to speed tests, which resulted in a splendid average of 18 knots being attained, and, after an exchange of salutes, the finest fleet that had ever visited America anchored off Annapolis in Chesapeake Bay. Prince Louis with his staff proceeded to Washington, where he was introduced to President Roosevelt by Durand, and presented a letter from King Edward. The British Admiral was received with marked honour and cordiality and was overwhelmed with hospitality, the President giving a banquet in his honour.

At New York the welcome was enthusiastically friendly, and the festivities culminated in a ball given on the flag-ship, which had been temporarily adapted to serve this purpose. The eulogies of the Press proved how potent an influence in the cause good of friendly relations are such visits, which give a sense of discipline, power and friendliness.

In December, Durand heard to his deep regret that, owing to the fall of the Unionist Cabinet, Lord Lansdowne had resigned the charge of the Foreign Office, which he had directed with such conspicuous success, and that he had been succeeded by Sir Edward Grey. In his farewell letter to Durand, Lansdowne wrote:

> The time has come when I must bid you my official farewell. It has been very pleasant to me to have as our representative in the United States so old a friend as yourself, and no one could have watched more faithfully or skilfully over the interests of this country. I have heard your praises sung by several visitors from the United States, and I think they meant what they said.

At the end of 1905, after completing two full years at Washington, Durand sums up the position:

> All is going well here. Root seems quite happy about Newfoundland and for the moment Lodge has ceased from troubling. I am looking with interest to see whether Roosevelt feels strong enough to try a fall with the Senate. If he does, and succeeds, as is possible, he will be very dangerous, as his prejudices are not in our favour.

CHAPTER XXII

CANADA, NEWFOUNDLAND, AND THE UNITED STATES

The granting of such claims as those now set up by the United States Government, namely exemption from the laws of this Colony or from their enforcement by officers of this Government, would involve the deprivation of the people of valuable maritime enterprise, ultimate extinction of present sources of wealth, and virtual transfer of sovereignty within certain territorial waters of the Colony to a Foreign Power.—SIR ROBERT BOND.

THE most important questions with which Durand was concerned while he was Ambassador at Washington, were the boundary of Alaska and the Newfoundland Fisheries dispute.

To outline the Alaska question; in 1867, the United States purchased from Russia all her territorial rights in Alaska and the adjacent islands for the sum of 7,200,000 dollars. By the Treaty, the Bering Sea was divided into two parts, of which the larger was on the American side of the line and included the Pribilof Islands, the principal breeding grounds of the seals. America claimed exclusive jurisdiction over the sealing industry in the entire Bering Sea area, a claim which Great Britain refused to accept, but expressed her willingness to negotiate upon the question of drawing up international regulations. These negotiations failed, since America insisted on preventing all pelagic sealing, and, in consequence, there was much tension between the two countries. Finally, the case was submitted to arbitration and, in 1893, the award was given in favour of Great Britain on all the points at issue.

There now remained the settlement of the actual boundary between Canada and Alaska. In its northern section this was an easy matter, since it was defined as running along a line of longitude, but in its southern section

the wording of the Treaty between Great Britain and Russia, on which American claims were based, was vague and constituted a veritable geographical puzzle.

The main dispute centred round the interpretation of the sentence that the boundary "shall be formed by a line parallel to the windings of the coast, which shall never exceed ten marine leagues therefrom." Was it intended to exclude the Canadians from the Pacific by a continuous strip of land which should be measured from the head of every inlet, or should the boundary cut across the fiords? A second point under dispute was the identification of the Portland Channel.

Until the discovery of gold in Klondyke, the country was regarded as worthless, but the rush to the goldfields changed the entire situation. There was a period of acute controversy on these questions, which resulted in an Agreement to settle them by a tribunal. The Agreement provided that each Government should appoint three commissioners, who should be "impartial jurists of repute." Roosevelt appointed Root, Lodge and Turner. The appointment of Root could not, of course, be objected to, as he was a great lawyer, but it should not be forgotten that he was also a member of the Executive and thus a party to the case. Lodge, on the other hand, had never practised, although he had been called to the bar. Moreover, he had made violent speeches, asserting that the claims of America were unassailable and vehemently denouncing the British arguments. Turner was a sound lawyer, but he had also delivered strong anti-British speeches on the question.

Upon being notified of the names of the United States Commissioners, Lord Minto and Sir Michael Herbert were both indignant, the Governor-General of Canada describing the appointments as "a monstrous thing."[1] The Foreign Office declined to protest, but Roosevelt's appointments outraged public opinion in Canada and gave good reason for mistrusting the United States

[1] "Life of Lord Minto," by John Buchan, p. 171.

Government. There was also bitter feeling against the alleged weakness of British support to the claims of Canada.

By the award, much to the disappointment of the Canadian representatives, the line was drawn from the head of the inlets, and Canada was cut off from the Pacific. On the other hand, the question of the Portland Channel was mainly settled in favour of Canada, and two islands which covered Port Simpson, a fine natural harbour, were awarded to her. Again, however, Canada was dissatisfied, alleging that the award of two neighbouring islands to America absolutely annulled the strategical advantage of owning the other islands—an argument that was somewhat far-fetched.

In its able article, *The Times*,[1] while sympathizing with the disappointment of Canada, pertinently pointed out that—

> the sole matter to be considered in fixing the boundary has been the interpretation of old existing treaties, and that the increased value for Canada now attaching to this debatable land is a consideration that is not, strictly speaking, relevant to the issue.

Whatever the facts might have been, Canadians felt very bitterly on the subject, as the award deprived them of free access to the interior by the Lynn Canal, which was considered to be essential for the future of the Yukon Territory.

Shortly after Durand's arrival at Washington, Mr. Hay proposed that one of the peaks on the Alaska boundary should be named Mount Herbert, as a memorial and in recognition of the large part taken by his predecessor in the creation of the tribunal. Durand wrote to Lord Minto on the subject, and his reply, after a reference to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, was that any such suggestion was inadvisable, and that the Alaska transaction had better be allowed to sleep, if possible.

In 1904 Durand was anxious to pay a visit to Canada

[1] Oct. 23, 1903.

so as to gain touch with Sir Wilfrid Laurier and ascertain the Canadian point of view on various questions. However, as he wrote to Lord Lansdowne :

> Lord Minto thought that my visit would be resented as an attempt to bring pressure to bear upon the Ministers in the interests of the United States, rather than approved as an attempt to learn something of Canada, and make the Embassy more fit to understand and safeguard Canadian interests.

At this period Mr. Hay desired to negotiate for all sealing to be stopped for a term of years sufficient to restore the herd, but the Canadian Government was not prepared to accept the principle on which Mr. Hay wished to reopen the question. There is no doubt that the Canadian Government had good reasons for mistrusting American proposals. Indeed Hay once confessed: " We are damned hogs in diplomacy. We want it all."

The Newfoundland Fisheries dispute was, like the Alaska boundary, a complicated question. American fishing rights on the coast of Newfoundland dated back to the time when the citizens of the United States were British subjects, and, after the War of Independence, these rights were continued until the hostilities of 1812 put an end to them.

By the Convention of 1818, the right to catch fish on the south-west and west coasts and to cure them on the unsettled parts of the southern seaboard, until such parts became settled, were again granted. Concurrently with these rights were those possessed by the French, whose activities seriously threatened the welfare of our oldest colony, which, in the meanwhile, was steadily developing. In 1904, the difficult question of the " French Shore " was settled amicably with France, but the rights of American fishermen remained to be regularized.

The new phase of the dispute with the United States concerning the Newfoundland fisheries originated in the refusal of the American Senate to ratify the Hay-Bond Convention, by the terms of which the Newfoundlanders

were granted special privileges for the sale of their fish in the United States, in return for the special favours that Americans enjoyed above the rights granted to them in 1818.

This refusal was due to the sinister activities of Lodge, who excited the fishermen of Gloucester, the chief fishing centre on the Atlantic seaboard, to protest against the Convention. He, furthermore, in pursuance of his fanatical dislike of the British, subsequently encouraged them to defy the Fishery Regulations of the Newfoundland Government, and thereby aroused ill-feeling between the two countries over fisheries that, so far as America was concerned, were estimated to be less than £50,000 in value.

Upon the refusal of the Senate to ratify the Convention, Sir Robert Bond decided to deprive the Americans of any special favours they had enjoyed, and to restrict them to their treaty rights. The fact was that the Americans for many years had either engaged Newfoundland fishermen to work for them, or had bought their catch from Newfoundlanders. In other words, they had not worked as fishermen themselves.

Acts were passed prohibiting Newfoundlanders from serving on foreign ships or supplying them with bait, *et cetera*, the intention being to compel the Americans to fish with their own crews or to abandon the fishing. It is interesting to note that Roosevelt realized the mistake that had been made. In a letter to Lodge, dated August 19, 1905, he writes:

> There is no use in hiding from ourselves the fact that the course followed in connexion with the unfortunate effort to negotiate the treaty has given deep offence to Newfoundland, and most naturally. If the circumstances had been reversed, this country in its turn would have been deeply angered. . . . Under such circumstances it is, of course, mere elementary common sense for us to try to show such patience and forbearance as is possible, until the exasperation caused by our very unfortunate action has worn off.[1]

[1] "The Roosevelt-Lodge Correspondence," ii., 175.

In spite of this being his considered view, Roosevelt tried to bluff Durand by saying "My people cannot be expected to take it lying down." Durand, however, promptly replied that it was very much the other way, and clearly explained the facts of the case.

In October, 1905, Root wrote officially to Durand that Lodge had made the following report:

> Newfoundland cruiser has arrived in Bay of Islands with Minister of Marine and Fisheries on board. The Minister has forbidden all vessels on American register to fish on Treaty Coast, where they now are, and where they have fished unmolested since 1818.

Accepting this report as a statement of fact, Root protested against the action of the Newfoundland Government as an infraction of treaty rights. To this dispatch, Durand replied, giving the true facts of the case, and pointing out that Lodge's allegations were incorrect.

Root's second dispatch was couched in strong terms that did him little credit. He denied the right of Newfoundland "to interfere at all, whether reasonably or unreasonably, with the American rights of fishing."

In view of the near approach of the fishing season, Sir Edward Grey decided to arrange a *modus vivendi*, so as to allow time for negotiating. But Bond, viewing the question entirely from the local point, protested vehemently against any steps being taken to remove the restrictions imposed by the new Acts. In the end, these protests were overruled, and rightly so as, in policy, the greater must include the less.

This question was duly settled, after Durand's departure, but it throws an unpleasant light on American conduct of affairs at that period and justified the profound mistrust which it inspired in Canada and Newfoundland.

Perhaps the most unsatisfactory and irritating part of Durand's work was pressing for the payment of claims due to British subjects by the American Government. They were claims, such as for damage done to a British

vessel by lighters of the American Government, the validity of which had been acknowledged by the President, as head of the Executive, and recommended by him for payment, but yet they were not paid. The reason was that Lodge obstructed the payment of these claims. Durand's comment ran:

I consider Lodge constitutionally incapable of forgoing any chance of an attack on England. As he is insecure in Massachusetts, he wants to raise any issue of this kind. It is unfortunate that one reckless man should have so much power for mischief, but, with the system as it is, any Senator can practically block any measure not regarded as of first-rate importance.

To its credit, the American Press was not entirely favourable to this discreditable action, as is proved by the following quotation from the *New York Herald:*

Senator Lodge's anti-British sentiments have wrecked the prospect held out by the House that the United States would pay half a dozen adjudicated claims of British corporations and citizens. The indifference of the United States to such obligations has become a byword in the chancelleries of Europe. The House passed bills to pay six British claims, the whole amount not exceeding 100,000 dollars. When these bills reached the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Senator Lodge declared he would not permit a single British claim to be favourably acted upon, until the fisheries dispute between the United States and Newfoundland was settled.

In the spring of 1906, Mr. Root, who was genuinely anxious to foster good relations between the two countries, although his dispatches were not always very happily worded, made certain proposals with a view to effecting an all-round settlement of outstanding cases. Durand, who was about to pay a flying visit home, wrote his views:

About Root's proposals to "clean the slate," I think he is quite honest, but I doubt whether, being new to the game, he knows what a big task he is undertaking. . . . I believe that by using and directing the force of the Canadians in such matters, we shall do better than by trying to fight the case ourselves. They will keep us from making undue concessions, which have characterized our negotiations with the United States since we threw half

of North America at their heads in 1783. I do not believe concession pays in dealing with this country, any more than newspaper gush. It is a country where all the leading men are lawyers or men of business, and they negotiate on business lines with a tendency to sharp practice, if cornered. The motto of the American statesman has always been :

Rem facias, rem,
Si possis recte, si non, quocunque modo rem.

Some are dishonest. I do not say Root is. I think him thoroughly well meaning. But Root is only part of the Government. The Canadians understand dealing with Americans better than we do, besides knowing the facts, so far as Canadian issues are concerned.

The visit of Earl Grey, the Viceroy of Canada, to New York at this time, gave Mr. Root an exceptional opportunity of furthering his plan, which he seized. At a banquet given by the Pilgrims' Society, after paying a friendly compliment to her Viceroy, he pronounced a slightly patronizing eulogy upon Canada, saying: "Her people are proud of their country as we are proud of ours, and we appreciate the fact that what was a little domain at our borders, has grown to be a great and powerful nation."

Earl Grey in reply began by referring to the fact that he was the first Viceroy of Canada to visit the United States, and his speech culminated in the statement that he was the representative of a people who believed that the twentieth century belonged to Canada. Nor did the matter stop there. Mr. Root was invited to visit Canada, and cordially accepted the invitation.

Durand's forecast was, however, correct, for when it came to the point, Root's proposals were considered to be disappointing by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and quite unacceptable.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE RECALL FROM WASHINGTON

Time's glory is to calm contending kings,
To unmask falsehood, and bring truth to light,
To stamp the seal of time in aged things,
To wake the morn, and sentinel the night,
To wrong the wronger till he render right.
—SHAKESPEARE—*The Rape of Lucrece.*

EARLY in the New Year of 1906, after the accession of the Liberal Party to power, Durand was received by the President, who soon—

passed to his favourite subject—the Rough Riders—some of them "fearful scallawags" but splendid shots and fighting men, always to be relied on even when deprived of their officers. But he said they required to be well commanded nevertheless. There were two other Rough Rider regiments. "No one ever heard of them. They had fool colonels." Wood was the man who made his regiment. When offered the command, Roosevelt recommended Wood and asked to serve under him, as Wood, though a doctor, had seen much active service and knew how to break in the wild Westerners. "I knew I should be able to lead them once they were in shape, just as well as Wood, perhaps better, but I wanted him to get them into shape." The —st N.Y. just alongside also had a fool colonel. The regiment was splendid at drill, as good as regulars, but the colonel found that drill was not war. He and his lieut.-colonel and major "simply funked," and his town-bred men got disorganized.

The President spoke freely about the ignorance and wrong-headedness of Congress regarding the Monroe Doctrine and other matters. He said that when he woke at night and the recollection of their doings came over him, he had to force himself to think of bears and other more agreeable subjects than Congress or he would never get to sleep again. He had made a study of Cromwell, and believed that he had no intention of making himself a dictator,

but was forced into it step by step by the wrong-headed opposition of his parliaments. "If I had the power to dissolve parliament, and the will to override the Constitution I should be tempted to do the same." But a man who has to work with representative institutions must train himself to get what he can—not what he felt he ought to get.

My business was to convey to him Sir Edward Grey's message to the effect that the views of H.M. Government as to our relations with America were the same as Lord Lansdowne's. The President met this with a very plain-spoken and cordial assurance that his own views had in no way changed. He "wanted to be on good terms with all countries, but he regarded England as the one country with which America ought to be on terms of close and confidential friendship, and so long as he remained at the White House that would be a cardinal principle of his policy." He cited as an instance of American co-operation the prompt withdrawal of the Legation from Corea, which was meant to show the world his unreserved acceptance of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, and his intention to act loyally in support of it. The Russians and Germans and even the French had been doubtful about his doing this, and had been watching him anxiously.

He spoke with some indignation about the report that he had disapproved of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty and was ready to join with others in thwarting it. He pressed me to speak to Jusserand about his attitude. I told him I had never doubted on the subject, since he unreservedly approved the treaty at Oyster Bay. He suggested as the only possible foundation for the report his having been grateful to the Kaiser for the support given in the Russo-Japanese negotiations. On saying good-bye, he told me he had shaken 9,000 hands that day, and was feeling rather sore, as some born fools would wring his hand fiercely, to show their cordiality.

A few days later Durand went for a ride with General Sanger, who—

was present as an Artillery officer at the fight between the *Merrimac* and the Union fleet. His battery on shore was so close to the *Congress* and *Cumberland* that he could hear the words of command. He saw the *Cumberland* sink, her stern rising high in air. He saw and heard the guns falling into her bows as she went down.

Durand heard another interesting story of the Civil War from a lady:

Mrs. Robson told me how, during the war, she rode across country to see friends at a Maryland plantation house, "hitched" her horse, found the door as usual open, and walked in. From the hall she saw sitting in a chair by the drawing-room window a young man, who immediately vanished. She called upstairs and her girl friend came down. She asked about the young man, and her friend looked at her fixedly and said: "My dear, you did not see any young man." She wondered, and then understood. It was a Confederate at home. It was, she said, like the old stories of Cavaliers and Roundheads.

The culminating function of the season was the marriage of the daughter of the President to Mr. Longworth. Although not primarily intended to be so, it became a State function, and presents were sent by King Edward and other sovereigns. Durand commented caustically on the "display of vulgarity on the part of the papers and public," which must have been very trying to the bride, who, hoping to escape being mobbed, left the White House for an unknown address, only to be serenaded that night by a brass band and a party in motor-cars.

Durand had arranged to run home for a few weeks in May, and paid a visit to the President before starting. Mr. Roosevelt—

had just come from receiving the new Japanese Ambassador, who, he said, looked like a German professor, not like a Japanese. He talked of the nation and remarked: "They are a wonderful people and have done wonderful things. What one cannot help feeling is at whose expense will they next do wonderful things?" That underlies all American feeling now about Japan.

Root came in and the President said to him: "The Ambassador tells me you are sending him a letter of twenty-nine pages. I trust you don't expect me to read it." Root replied, "I hope you will eventually." The President showed his teeth and said, "I don't mind betting you I don't." Whether this was mere chaff, or intended to show his lack of interest in the matter, or his trust in Root, I do not know.

Durand had intended to take short leave and to sail for home at the end of April, but delayed his departure for a few days, in order to take home Root's long letter, containing his scheme for "cleaning the slate." He reached England in the middle of May and visited the Foreign Office. In his diary he writes:

Called on Grey and had a long talk with him. I advised that no gush should be shown in our dealings with America, and told him all about the President, the Hampden miniature, etc. He asked me many pertinent questions. He said that he was not sanguine about the Root negotiations, but was willing to try. I went on to the Colonial Office and saw Lord Elgin, who was pleasant, but also not sanguine.

Upon his return to Washington, he writes:

Having no particular business, I have not asked for an interview with the President. I saw Root, who was friendly and pleasant. He talked about the Kaiser and said that his effort all through the Morocco business was to secure a port opposite Gibraltar; that our Government did not seem to mind, and that America really saved it.

In August, after spending a few days at Newport, Durand paid his long-deferred visit to Canada. His diary runs:

Montreal is picturesque but does not give one the idea of a very progressive place. I had breakfast in a fine new hotel, the "Windsor," which I came upon by chance, and then drove round the town in a victoria, seeing the river bank, the jetties, and the streets. In the afternoon we went on to Quebec, arriving about 6 o'clock. The view across the river was beautiful, and made the more striking by the presence of the *Dominion* and two German cruisers, whose white sides and yellow funnels contrasted with the sober grey of our great battleship. Until one looked closely, the cruisers were rather the more imposing of the two.

The Château Frontenac, very well and fittingly built, by the way, was crowded, and I had a small room and found it hard to get any food; but before trying for dinner I took advantage of the last hour of daylight to drive out to the Heights of Abraham and see the battlefield. Wolfe's small monument was dwarfed by the

neighbouring jail, and a potato patch on the other side took off from the effect of the whole. There is an open bit on the side from which our troops advanced, soon I fear to be covered by rows of trees. The road seems to run right through the battlefield from end to end.

On Wednesday morning I found myself by chance sitting at breakfast next to Lord Grey's private secretary, who told me Lord Grey was ready to see me any time in the morning. I started at a quarter-to-eleven, and the "cocher" drove me off all the way to the Lieut.-Governor's house at Spencer Wood, which made me very late. I found Lord Grey in his quarters in the Citadel, and while waiting to see him I was taken up to the terrace, from which one had a magnificent view of the St. Lawrence. The blue mountains to the left, and the broad blue river, reminded me curiously of the southern coast of the Caspian. Lord Grey, who had invited me to meet him and Laurier, was with Laurier when I arrived. The latter is a little like Alfred Lyall in appearance and manner. He was very civil, but expressed some disappointment with Root's proposals, particularly about the fur seals, saying they went even less far than former proposals and were quite unacceptable. I think I made him see that I was in no way keen to press them.

After leaving Quebec, Durand went by steamer to Murray Bay:

The view down the St. Lawrence, fourteen miles broad, is very beautiful. Wooded mountains to left with some cultivation and *habitant* cottages, low blue coast to right and apparently open sea in front. To the north there is nothing but unbroken forest. Drove out ten miles into camp. Met at a lonely little settlement by Bessie Oliver[1] in long boots and camp attire. Walked with her along trail to log huts by lake. Beautiful forests, but sombre. Found merry party and girls received me with the National Anthem played on a fiddle and two mouth-organs. Slept in little tent on bed of balsam pine. Camp arrangements a complete contrast to India, with one basin for five men; no beds or chairs or liquor, but delightful. Saw Taft, who has reduced himself from 330 to 254 lb.

In the early autumn, Durand visited Boston:

We went to Harvard and saw President Elliot. We were shown over the buildings It was interesting but, of course, lacked

[1] Daughter of Mr. Oliver, Assistant-Secretary of the War Department.

the stately beauty of Oxford and Cambridge. The boys looked rough and curiously lacking in colour. Some actually earn their living in the town, while attending college. The professor who showed us round said that the boys were likeable and honest, but that, on the average, their keenness for work was not higher than in England.

* * * * *

Durand had settled down once again at Lenox, when his successful career was suddenly cut short without warning. At the end of October, he received a letter from Sir Edward Grey to the effect that he had come to the conclusion with great reluctance that there must be a change in the Embassy. The reason given was that he (Durand), owing to his temperament, was unable to keep in personal touch with the President and Mr. Root, and that the British Embassy was consequently placed at a considerable disadvantage, compared with one or two of the other Embassies. The letter held out no hope of another appointment in the Diplomatic Service.

The blow was a staggering one. Durand had been in England in May and had received no hint of any kind from Sir Edward Grey that he had any cause of dissatisfaction with him, or that any complaints had been made against him.

The facts of the case appear to be that the President and Mr. Root had informed the Foreign Office through the American Ambassador that, while feeling personal regard and respect for Durand, they found themselves unable to maintain sufficiently free and frank confidential intercourse with him on current diplomatic questions, or to discuss pending questions with prosperous results, and that if negotiations on any important question were at any time contemplated, they would be obliged to ask that a special envoy should be sent for the purpose.

At this point it is important to examine Roosevelt's reasons, and, in order to do so, it is necessary to go back for some years. When Roosevelt was a young man, he was a Civil Service Commissioner at Washington. Spring-

Rice was, at that time, a secretary at our Embassy, as was Herbert. At the German Embassy was Speck von Sternberg. These men were friends together, and, some years later, when Roosevelt was married for the second time, in London, Spring-Rice, as already mentioned, was his best man.

Roosevelt was nominated Vice-President, but the shot of a madman brought him to the White House, and he immediately set to work to secure the return of his friends to Washington. He invited Speck to stay with him, and his influence soon resulted in Speck's appointment as Ambassador. His efforts to secure Spring-Rice failed, but Herbert, whom he also liked, was appointed. On the premature death of Herbert, he again used his influence to secure the appointment of Spring-Rice, but the British Foreign Office, unlike the German Emperor, declined to be influenced by his wishes, and Durand was selected. Roosevelt probably resented the appointment, and considered it to be a slight to himself. He therefore vented his feelings on Durand, who, being entirely ignorant of the cause, failed to understand the lack of real cordiality and friendliness with which he was treated.

In the interests of his work, Durand took what proved to be the unfortunate step of inviting Spring-Rice to visit him at Washington. This re-awakened all Roosevelt's old feelings for Spring-Rice, and he determined to make another effort to get his friend appointed Ambassador. The recently published "Roosevelt-Lodge Correspondence" throws valuable light on the matter. In a letter dated May 24, 1905, a few weeks after the departure of Spring-Rice, Roosevelt writes to Lodge, who was in England:

> As for Durand, unless we could have "Springy," I think he had better stay in Washington. I like him and get on with him.[1]

A month later, he writes again:

> I think I, a little, overstated the case about Durand in my last letter to you. He is a high-minded, conscientious public servant

[1] "The Roosevelt-Lodge Correspondence," ii., 125.

and I like him personally. But he is very slow. In this crisis, he has been away at Lenox, which I have been glad of, as O'Beirne [1] is a really much more satisfactory man through whom to act. Do not do anything to hurt Durand, and do not express any opinion, unless it is asked for; but if either the King or Lansdowne should ask as to what man we would think best, you might dwell upon the good qualities of Spring-Rice. The only thing is, remember to be cautious, so that they cannot hold us responsible for making "Springy" a success.[2]

Apart from the main cause of Roosevelt's action, indicated in the foregoing extract, the reasons that induced him to attempt to oust the Ambassador are given by Durand himself in a memorandum which he wrote on his recall:

Mr. Hay unfortunately died in 1905, and was succeeded by Mr. Root. I had seen something of Root and liked him, but he was a very different man from Hay, and his first official act was to send me a letter of a somewhat aggressive character, based on some reckless statements of Mr. Lodge's, regarding the Newfoundland fisheries. I replied to this letter with extreme care and the strongest desire to avoid anything which could give offence. But I was obliged to point out that Lodge's statements were incorrect. I have no doubt that my doing so was resented. Root had begun his career by making a mistake and did not like having it shown up.

Neither did he like my speech to him about the manner in which British claims in general were being treated. This was a very old question. The State Department had no power to appropriate money in payment of claims which it had admitted. These have to go to Congress. For years past, the State Department had been passing British claims, which were approved by the President, and submitted to Congress, and then burked by Senator Lodge, who openly declared that he would allow no British claim to go through because of some alleged injustice committed against one of his Gloucester fishermen by a Canadian Court. Hay used to speak to *me* freely about this yearly performance, which was, in fact, a very dishonest one on the part of the President, who could easily have induced Lodge to stand out of the way, if he had really wished just claims to be paid.

[1] Mr. O'Beirne was drowned with Lord Kitchener.
[2] "The Roosevelt-Lodge Correspondence," ii., 133.

In addition to all this there was undoubtedly the personal equation, to which reference has already been made. It is dwelt on by Mr. Poultney Bigelow, who wrote:[1]

> No one here quite appreciated the reasons for Sir Mortimer's recall. But as all this hurly-burly diplomacy happened in the reign of Roosevelt, I surmise that one who had been through the Kabul campaign under Lord Roberts, and who had been reared in the strict school of Indian and European administration and etiquette, would have difficulty in concealing his contempt for a President who talked incessantly about himself. Sir Mortimer could not flatter our strenuous Teddy . . . He was habitually truthful and was recalled because Roosevelt wished it. . . . Our obstreperous President in those years was an American Jupiter *Tonans*.

Roosevelt worked through the American Ambassador in London and through his numerous friends, both British and American, and waited to see the result. There had always been jealousy at Durand being "pitchforked" into the Diplomatic Service, as a member of the Corps once put it to me, and, at this time, influences hostile to him were very powerful at the Foreign Office. Moreover, Durand was not exempt from troubles with his staff, although the mischief done under this heading was probably exaggerated in the American Press. However that may be, when Roosevelt ascertained that Durand would not be supported by the Foreign Office, he was encouraged to make an official *démarche* which would, he knew, make Durand's recall a certainty.

Durand describes his visit to the Foreign Office upon his return to England in his diary:

> Sir Edward Grey told me that the President could not do business with me and had intimated through the American Ambassador that if negotiations upon Mr. Root's proposals were to be carried on, he must ask for a special envoy to be sent. I pointed out that the meaning of the President's communication simply was that he could not do business with me upon his own terms, without regard for British interests. Grey then spoke of his "impression" that

[1] "Seventy Summers," p. 194.

I was not suited for diplomatic work, that it was a pity I was moved from India, and so on. I asked for his reasons and as he could give none, I told him that as Lord Dufferin and Lord Lansdowne who knew me intimately held directly contrary views, he could hardly expect me to agree with him. I further pointed out that I had practically been employed on diplomatic work for more than thirty years, not only since I entered the English Diplomatic Service. Altogether it was a most unsatisfactory interview. Of course he disclaimed all personal feeling—and I entirely acquitted him of that, but said he had been misled, and had done me great injustice

Durand's position at Washington until his departure was one of extreme difficulty, and he bore himself with great dignity. The following extract from the diary of December 4 is significant:

Lunched to-day at the White House. Only the President and Taft; the former very didactic, the latter very cordial, as ever. The President said not a word about my going, but was "very glad to have had this glimpse of you." His A.D.C.s say he is "mad as hops," whatever that means, about the English article on his intimacy with Speck.

To-day Porter, *The Times* correspondent, came and told me he had spoken to the President, who was greatly disturbed, and denied ever having treated me differently from Speck; he also "spoke in the highest terms" of me, and authorized Porter to publish what he said. Root was equally complimentary or more so. Porter wanted to know whether I should like publication. I declined to be a party to it in any way, and said I would rather not see what he wrote. Having successfully intrigued me out of the way, the President is evidently now anxious to cover himself. He knows his intimacy with the Germans is not liked in America. It will be amusing if his high opinion of me is published.

[Later], Curzon came to Washington yesterday on business. He asked to be told about my retirement and was most sympathetic, regarding the whole thing as "monstrous injustice."

Durand's account of bidding his official farewell runs:

I handed in my letter. I said little, and nothing personal. "Mr. President, it is now my duty to present to you my letter of recall. In doing so I wish to express to you the regret which I feel at leaving America where I have spent three happy years, and

where I have many friends. It is a great satisfaction to me to know that the relations between our two countries are thoroughly good. I can only say that I hope they will always remain so, and that the ties which connect England and America will grow stronger year by year."

He answered, to my surprise, rather warmly. He knows he is safe, for his words are not reported. "Mr. Ambassador, I wish to assure you that your departure will cause most sincere regret among the wide circle of friends you possess in America. I believe that all with whom you have come into contact regard you with feelings of the greatest respect, and with many you are on terms of affectionate intimacy. For my own part I wish to say officially that I have never had to do with any foreign representative whose proceedings inspired more entire confidence, and I have felt it a privilege to be associated with one who maintained so high a standard of conduct both in regard to the interests of his own country and in regard to those of the country to which he is accredited. It gives me pleasure to think that during the period of your mission there has been a continuous improvement in the reciprocal good relations existing between the two countries, than which at the present time nothing could be more satisfactory." Of course there was no personal regret—or warmth—I rather respect him for that.

I thanked the President for his kind words, and withdrew. I then walked over with Root, who had been present, to the State Department, where I had to sign a protocol with Whitelaw Reid. Bacon attended and expressed much regret at my going, in which Reid joined.

After signing I was asked to go to Root's room. He asked me to sit down and then said he wished to associate himself with all the President had said. He regretted extremely that our official relations were coming to an end, and thanked me for the courtesy and consideration I had always shown him. He hoped that we might meet again. "I assure you that I most deeply and sincerely regret your going." I responded, and said how much I had enjoyed our official relations, "which began if you remember by your presenting me with a white dove of peace off a Christmas tree at the Country Club. I found it yesterday in a cupboard when I was packing my things." He remembered, and the interview broke up pleasantly.

Durand's last entry in America runs :

We left the house shortly after 3.30 and drove down to the station. Saw Lodge—*fons et origo malorum*—as we drove into Lafa-

yette Square. He says the British Government has treated me worse than the President treated Storer. At the station was a great crowd of people who had come to see us off, all the *Corps Diplomatique*, Roots, Tafts, Spooners, Metcalfs, and scores of others. It was a great "send off" and nearly broke me down. At New York we went to the Waldorf, where Sanderson came, also Joffcoatt and Whittenham of the Lenox County Club to present me with a very nice clock inkstand from the Club. It was good of the men. Next morning, the 29th, many callers. Hardys, Choates, Adams, Hammond, etc. etc. All very cordial. Also many letters to write. We went on board a little before 2 o'clock and found there the Barnes girls, Sanderson, the Ryans, and others. Several kind telegrams, one from Oliver sending much love to us all and saying regret at our departure was "outspoken and universal."

The *Standard* referred to the send-off "as the most impressive farewell ever given to a retiring diplomat."

We found on board books, baskets of fruit, and flowers enough to stock a shop, I also received the following kind letter from Lord Grey: "You will take home with you the good wishes of many loyal friends, whom you are leaving behind you on this side of the Atlantic. One of the pleasantest recollections I brought away with me from my trip to Washington last April was the way in which American gentlemen, when speaking of you, referred to you. I trust your departure may have been made by them the excuse for taking the liberty of telling you to your face the nice things they said of you behind your back. It was very gratifying to me as an Englishman, to find that, in a centre of intrigue and gossip like Washington, the British Ambassador had so many good and loyal friends."

Among the many articles couched in most appreciative terms, I quote from one in *Harper's Weekly*, which Durand in his diary characterized as "singularly accurate."

In addition to grounds of political disagreement, there was also a want of personal sympathy between the two men. Sir Mortimer Durand probably distrusted the President; Mr. Roosevelt probably thought the British Ambassador very British. At any rate, the President determined, if possible, to get rid of him. He has many friends and correspondents in London. They were

made aware that a change in the British Embassy at Washington would be acceptable to the President. The social influence of the American colony in the British capital is very considerable, and it was adroitly brought to bear against Sir Mortimer. It has even been said in America that Mr. Roosevelt wrote more than once on the subject to a member of the British Cabinet.

He found many allies. Petticoat diplomacy was called in to his assistance. All ambassadors have trouble at some time or another with their attachés' and secretaries' wives. Sir Mortimer had not been exempt from the common ills of the ambassadorial lot, and at a hint from Mr. Roosevelt those who had grievances against him began with one accord to bombard Sir Edward Grey.

The end was thoroughly characteristic. It was characteristic of the British Foreign Minister to give way before American pressure. It was characteristic of Mr. Roosevelt to smother with praise, at their final meeting, the man against whom he had been so busily intriguing. It was also characteristic of the Diplomatic Corps in Washington that they should give Sir Mortimer on his departure a magnificent send-off. The meaning of that send-off was not wholly grasped at the time by the American people. They took it to be merely a demonstration of the regard in which Sir Mortimer had been held. It was far more a demonstration of protest against his treatment by the President.

But Mr. Roosevelt had a further objective in view besides getting rid of Sir Mortimer Durand. He wished to have a hand in nominating his successor. He had fixed upon the British Minister to Persia, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, a former attaché at the Washington Embassy, as the right man for the post. He could not, of course, say so openly and officially, but it was perfectly well known in Washington, and no doubt his friends in London were made acquainted with his wishes. Many of them, at any rate, if my information is correct, began to suggest to Sir Edward Grey, with a curious unanimity, that Sir Cecil Spring-Rice was pre-eminently fitted to take Sir Mortimer Durand's place. But the President had forgotten Mr. Bryce. . . . He wanted to represent Great Britain at Washington, and his qualifications were so overwhelming that it was merely a question of whether he wished to press his claims. Mr. Bryce did care, with the result, of course, that he was appointed. The President's dismay was almost comical. "I see," he said, "that they know how to play politics over there just as we do here."

Another American tribute in the *Sun*, after expressing deep regret at Durand's departure, ends as follows:

During his stay at Washington, he made many excursions of study and observation, of which fashionable society knew nothing; and it is entirely safe to say that he will take back with him to England a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of this people than any foreigner has ever had before. . . . So he leaves us, a kind and wise and sympathetic friend; perfectly aware of the virtues and defects of Americans, but loving them and feeling for them as his own.

Finally I quote from a leader in the *Morning Post:*

At Washington, as in Afghanistan, Persia and Spain, Great Britain has never had an abler representative than Sir Mortimer Durand. To a thorough knowledge of American institutions, and particularly of American character, he united a devotion to Imperial interests all the firmer for being unprovocative. Too many British Ambassadors at Washington have forgotten that they represented the Empire as well as Great Britain. They have rather fallen into the way of looking upon Canada and Newfoundland and the diplomatic questions connected with them, as unpalatable interruptions in their task of promoting Anglo-American amity. Sir Mortimer Durand has never taken so incomplete and one-sided a view of his duties and responsibilities. He has striven to place the relations between the two countries on a basis of business-like reciprocity and respect and to discountenance the fallacy that American friendship either could or should be purchased by the surrender of any colonial rights; and it is not too much to say that during his term of office, Canadians and Newfoundlanders came to regard the British Embassy at Washington as more truly representative of their interests than Downing Street itself.

To sum up this chapter: there is no doubt that the strong affection Roosevelt felt for Spring-Rice made him anxious to secure his return to Washington as Ambassador. After failing twice in his efforts, he made the best of Durand, having probably ascertained that Lord Lansdowne entertained the highest opinion of him. The visit of Spring-Rice evidently reawakened his feelings for him, but he felt that he had little excuse for ousting Durand—

and Lord Lansdowne was still Foreign Secretary. Meanwhile the cases referred to in the previous chapter proved that Durand was a strong upholder of British claims, and the President, who was arrogant and overbearing, resented this attitude. Then came the change of Government, and Roosevelt determined to have another try, although Durand had been at Washington for close on three years. On this occasion he found that Durand was not supported, and so he succeeded in his scheme.

From Roosevelt's point of view his action was probably "good politics." That question I do not propose to discuss, but I can state emphatically that the late Sir Cecil Spring-Rice was an English gentleman, and that he took no part in the intrigue.

My chief object in writing this biography has been to vindicate a dead friend who was deeply wronged, and the two extracts from Roosevelt's letters to Lodge, quoted on page 304, have helped me in the most signal matter. I recently laid them before Lord Lansdowne and asked him: "Do you consider that these extracts, taken together with the other evidence, vindicate Durand?" To this question the veteran statesman replied in the affirmative, and this will, I am confident, be the conclusion of all Durand's fellow-countrymen who read this book.

CHAPTER XXIV

DURAND AS AUTHOR

"I must tell you how much I admire your poems. I am very fond of poetry, and I always recognize the true 'estro' when I see it. Your pieces are instinct with it."—LORD DUFFERIN TO DURAND.

UPON his return home, Durand was well received. Much sympathy was shown to him by Lord Roberts, Lord Ripon, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Curzon, Sir Alfred Lyall, and many other friends. Lord Ripon pressed the Cabinet for "a satisfactory mark of confidence and approval of His Majesty's Government," but nothing came of his efforts.

Against this failure must be set off the informal offer of the Governorship of Bombay, to succeed Lord Lamington, but—

I said "No" and explained the reason. Loss of five years and possible loss of pension.

It seems a great pity that Durand refused this offer. Sir Edward Grey would presumably have been ready to arrange the matter of the necessary permission, and the question of the pension would not have been affected. There are few officials who do not suffer, at one time or another, from deep furrows being ploughed on their backs. Had Durand returned to India as Governor of Bombay, he would probably have been extremely successful and have possibly been in the running for the Viceroyalty. However, he was very sore at this period and hardly in the mood to consider the offer fairly.

Sir Alfred Lyall took up the question of his pension with the Foreign Office and, thanks mainly to his strenuous advocacy, he was considered to be on leave until 1909,

when he received a diplomatic pension of £1,500 per annum. He also drew his Indian Civil Service pension of £1,000 per annum, which was, at that time, mainly made up of sums deducted during years of service. His private means amounted to about £200 per annum. The gross value of his estate was under £4,000 at his death.

Durand first took a house in Chelsea, but Lady Durand was ordered to live out of London and so Camberley was selected. There he settled down to literary work and also to golf, which added a zest to his life and kept him physically fit, although he became unduly depressed when he played badly.

To a certain extent he maintained his connexion with America, proposing "The Visitors" at a banquet given by the Pilgrims to Mr. Bryce, his successor at Washington. He also proposed the health of "The President" at the 4th of July banquet. The latter speech was a very trying one to make, but he received many congratulations on it.

He was invited to the annual dinner of the Omar Khayyam Club, and, shortly afterwards, was elected President of the club. He filled this post with entire success, even to providing some flasks of Shiraz wine on the occasion when I happened to be a guest.

To turn to more serious tasks, Durand was Director of the Royal Asiatic Society from 1911 to 1919, and President of the Central Asian Society from 1914 to 1917. He presided at the meetings with untiring courtesy and dignity, and was frequently able to add something of value to the discussions. He also read papers before these and other kindred societies.

* * * * *

As we have seen, throughout his life, Durand's passion was the sword, but yet he had a deep affection for the pen. I have occasionally quoted from his writings, and I now propose to deal briefly with them.

The first literary task that Durand undertook was the editing of his father's history of the First Afghan War

in 1879. To quote from one of his letters to Mrs. Rivett-Carnac:

> The work was written many years ago and is only a fragment. But it covers a considerable period of time, tracing the causes of the war, Keane's campaign, and the course of military and political events throughout 1839, 1840, 1841, down to the beginning of 1842. It thus covers all our reverses. My father had special sources of information as Lord Ellenborough's private secretary. It requires much careful revising and supplying of names, dates, etc

The reviews were most satisfactory. The *Observer* termed it " a fragment of priceless value to the historian," while the *Pall Mall Gazette* ended up its review with the words:

> We would offer the suggestion that no statesman should venture to touch authoritatively the Afghan difficulty who has not included Durand's " First Afghan War " among the books digested for the occasion.

The next task that Durand undertook was that of writing his father's biography, which was published in 1883. The materials were, if anything, too abundant, there being thousands of letters, dispatches, and minutes to be sifted.

When everything was put in order, Durand took three months' leave to Bhagalpur—the home of his wife—and there, inspired by filial devotion, he worked night and day, finishing the last chapter at the very end of his leave. The " Life " was published in two volumes of small print, the second being wholly devoted to minutes on subjects ranging from Central Asia to Burma and from Central India to Abyssinia. According to views now prevailing, the work could have been compressed here and there with advantage. Moreover, I understand that Sir Henry Durand, although a deeply religious and serious man, was by no means a man who never enjoyed life. His son was deeply affected by the tragedy of his father's death and, being thus unconsciously influenced, wrote in a somewhat gloomy strain. Apart from this, the subject is treated

with remarkable judiciousness, although filial pride, if restrained, is all pervading—and rightly so.

The reviews were most favourable. Some of them referred to controversies that had raged, and praised the conspicuous fairness of the biographer in presenting both sides of the question with complete impartiality. One reviewer mentioned " the celebrated article on the Second Sikh War, written for the *Calcutta Review*, which is, to this day, the best source of historical information regarding that famous campaign."

Durand's first novel, " Helen Treveryan, or The Ruling Race," was written while he was recovering from his serious illness; it was published anonymously, in 1891, under the pseudonym of " John Roy." In a letter to Sir William Lockhart he gives the purpose underlying the book:

> I was handicapped. I did not want to write a novel, but to say certain things about India and the race, and to say them I had rather to spoil the book as a novel, while I knew that unless I wrote in novel form, I should have no readers.

The book begins with a delightful description of the home of the Treveryan family in Cornwall, which beautiful county he was then learning to love. The scene then changes to India, and the heroine is introduced as the daughter of the Commissioner of Syntia, which was, in reality, Bhagalpur with its British colony. A description follows of life in the cold weather, and a chapter is reserved for an obnoxious globe-trotter:

> Mr. Pitt Wright was a man with a fine place in the Eastern counties and an income vaguely spoken of as twenty thousand a year. He had lost his father when he was a boy and had grown up without much home discipline. He was by no means a fool; but he was proud of his money, and extremely careful in spending it; and he had a conceited and supercilious manner, particularly with women, which was not agreeable. He evidently considered himself of very much greater importance than his host, and his manner to Helen was familiar and patronizing.

So much for Mr. Pitt Wright. Helen did not like him, but was much attracted by Guy Langley, a dashing young subaltern in a British cavalry regiment. They fell in love and became engaged, but Guy's mother being bitterly opposed to his engagement to a girl in India, he was obliged to join the Indian Staff Corps, as he could not afford to remain in an expensive British regiment.

Guy takes part in the Second Afghan War and here Durand gives not only masterly descriptions of the country and its wild but manly inhabitants, but also introduces us to—

the well-known figure of General Roberts, as trim and smart as if he were at Aldershot; MacGregor, a powerful man with a commanding face, peeling an apple and singing to himself in a deep, low voice; Padre Adams, a well-built athletic figure in clerical black; and Durand, a big man with a brown beard.

Before the end of the campaign, Guy is killed by Afghans hiding in ambush, and Helen goes home to stay with her husband's mother, who treats her unkindly. One of the characters, who appears and disappears somewhat abruptly and who was evidently modelled on Sir Charles MacGregor, reappears, and after a long wooing, marries the fair Helen. By rare good fortune, Durand in a letter explains the motives underlying the plot:

I could not help Guy's death. I do not think that, at first, I meant him to be killed, but I got to love Helen, and he was not really worthy of her. If he had lived, he would certainly have made her unhappy. Was it not better he should die like a good soldier, than live to make love to every pretty woman who came in his way?

Perhaps the best criticism of the book is that given by Sir Alfred Lyall:

There is a great deal of spirited writing and striking description of Indian life and scenery; and nowhere else are to be found such true pictures of Afghan campaigning. In the first volume my interest flagged a little, but the second fairly caught me and held me; and, in the third, I was much touched by the whole account of Helen's departure from India. . . . You were bound to marry

her again, though you cannot expect this very natural but slightly commonplace ending to bring down the house at the curtain's fall.

Durand was undoubtedly gifted with a vein of poetry in his nature, as the verses I have already quoted fully prove. He was strongly attracted by Lermontoff when a young man, and learnt Russian sufficiently well to be able to translate some of his poems into English. The most important to be thus treated was *The Demon*, with its theme reminiscent of Milton's *Paradise Lost:*

A gloomy spirit from Heaven hurled,
Brooded over the sinful world;
And many a dream of a happier day
Thronged on his memory;—far away
He lived again in the realms of light,
A glittering angel, pure and bright,
All innocent yet of the sin to be,
And the doom of a hopeless eternity.

The Demon in his wanderings saw the fair Tamara, daughter of a Georgian chief:

But never earthly eye hath scanned
A form so rapturously fair,
Nor ever yet an earthly hand
In loving dalliance hath strayed
Upon the brow of earthly maid
Through such a wealth of hair.

The Demon falls in love with Tamara, the bridegroom on the way to the wedding is killed in an ambush, and the Demon infects hapless Tamara for the rest of her life:

With panting breast and trembling limb
Half stifled to her feet she springs,
A mist before her seems to swim,
And in her ears the hot blood sings;
And mastering shame the sudden storm
Of passion sweeps her arms apart,
Upon her lips the kisses form,
She calls her lover to her heart.

Durand took immense pains to reproduce the spirit of the Russian original, and, viewed as a translation, there is much merit in his verses.

Durand's original poems are infused with deep feeling for the beauties of Nature, with tenderness, with loyalty, and with love of the sword. His masterpiece is undoubtedly *Attar Singh*. He told me that he came on the details of the story in a dry office file and was immediately struck by its possibilities as a theme. I quote it in full:

ATTAR SINGH *LOQUITUR*

I've come to make my salaam, Sahib, my soldiering days are done.
Your father was ever a friend to me, I'm glad to have seen his son.
Well, yes, it's hard to be going. I'm an old man now I know,
But I come of a tough old fighting stock, and I find it hard to go,
To feel that my life is over, that my sword must hang on the wall,
Never again to leap from its sheath at the ring of the trumpet call.
I think I could do some service yet, aye, though my beard be white,
For my heart still warms to the tramp of horse and longs for the rush of the fight.
Ah! well, it comes to us all, Sahib. I am old, I have had my day,
And the young men think me a dotard, and wish me out of the way.
Maybe they're right. When I was young I should have done the same,
But I come of a tough old fighting stock, and the blood is hard to tame.
I think they are not what we were, who were bred in the wild old time,
When every Singh was a soldier, and Ranjit was in his prime.
Before I was out of my boyhood I knew what it was to feel
The joy and shock of the onset, and the bite of a foeman's steel.
I rode by the side of my father when we scattered the Afghan hordes,
And I longed for the day when the Khalsa host should roll on the Sutlej fords.

Not one of us feared for the issue; we had seen your Poorbeahs yield
To a cowardly half-armed rabble we drove like sheep from the field;
So we longed for the day that we felt must come,—an evil day when it came—
God's curse on the cowardly traitors who sold the Khalsa to shame.
My father fell at Sobraon. There was blood on the old man's sword
As foot by foot you bore us back to the brink of the flooded ford.
We never broke, though around us the river was choked with dead,
My God, how the grape tore through us from the guns at the bridge's head.
I had been unhorsed by a round shot, but I found my way to his side,
And I held by the old man's stirrup as he plunged his horse in the tide.
I never knew how the end came, for the stream soon forced us apart,
But he died, as a Sikh Sirdar should die, with the fight still hot in his heart.
We saw that the war was over when we formed on the western bank,
The sword of the Khalsa was broken, and the hearts of the bravest sank.
We were all unused to be conquered; you had taught us the lesson at last.
But you left us with arms in our hands, Sahib, to brood on the hopes of the past.
And we knew we had pressed you sorely, that the game had been all but won,
And the Sikh blood boiled for another fight ere a year of peace had run.
Well, you know how the train was fired again, you know how the Khalsa rose,
And if you bore us down at last, you found us stubborn foes.
Full thirty years are gone since then, but still my heart beats high,
To think how wild the battle raged against the darkening sky.
I led a troop at Chilianwál; they say I led it well;
Near half of us were cold and stiff before the darkness fell.
How clear it all is still! I seem to hear the roar of fight,
And see the fair-haired English come cheering at our right,

And swarms of slavish Poorbeahs, the scorn of the Khalsa's sons,
They were falling fast, and the rush was spent before they reached the guns,
And then we burst upon them, all winded as they came,
And the shattered line went reeling back, torn through with sword and flame.
There was little to choose between us that night when the red sun set;
We taught those hounds a lesson they have never forgotten yet.
Ah, yes! I know how it ended, how the big guns swept us away,
But never a cringing Poorbeah came up to our swords that day.
My God, how I longed to see them; how I longed to hear once more
The shrill short cheer of the charging line high over the battle's roar;
But still the big guns thundered on, and the plain grew like a hell
As hour on hour upon us poured the stream of shot and shell.
We gave at last, what could we do? and the Poorbeahs yelled on our tracks:
But for the guns and the white men they'd never have seen our backs.
But for the guns and the white men we'd have hunted them through Lahore
And laid all Delhi in ashes, Sahib, and many a fat town more.
But what is the use of boasting now? My lands were taken away,
And the Company gave me a pension of just eight annas a day,
And the Poorbeahs swaggered about our streets as if they had done it all—
The dogs. We settled old scores, though, when we got their backs to the wall.
We were all right weary of years of peace when the murdering cowards rose,
And never a one of us all but longed for a chance at his father's foes.
Ah, Sahib, you were wise to trust us, our fingers itched for the steel;
I was first man up to the summons, with a score good Singhs at my heel.
Rare times those were for a soldier, wild months of battle and storm,
And the horse well into the thick of it wherever we'd room to form.

I rode to Delhi with Hodson. There were three of my father's sons :
Two of them lie at the back of the ridge, in the line of the Moree's guns.
I followed him on when the great town fell. He was cruel and cold, they said,
The men were sobbing around me the day that I saw him dead.
It's not soft words that a soldier wants ; we knew what he was in fight,
And we love the man who can lead us, aye though his face be white.

* * * * * *

In this stirring poem Durand's passion for the sword has full play, and he writes as he never wrote again. It first appeared anonymously in the *Pioneer*, and many guesses were hazarded as to its author. Durand was much pleased at Lyall warmly eulogizing it to him, without a suspicion that he was doing so in the presence of the author, who was undoubtedly influenced by the *Old Pindaree*.

Another poem, written in quite a different strain, is a satire on a civilian, who refused to join in any form of sport or recreation. The opening stanzas run:

ANAX ANDRON

A STORY FOUNDED ON FACT

He sailed from the dear old country
When the autumn winds blew cool,
And he braved the dash of the bounding wave
Like a man of the grand young school,
With a teeming brain, and a ready tongue,
And a heart afire to rule.

He called on his new Collector,
A proud steed champed at the door,
For that fierce bold man was preparing
To follow the tuskéd boar,
And around him was many a pawing horse,
And many a wild spear more.

He took from his lips a meerschaum,
Unpleasantly black and strong,
And he clenched the hand of the noble boy
In a pitiless gripe and long,
And he said—"Come on, I've a spear to spare;
Will you join in the festive throng?"

I saw the red blood mantle,
Then sink from its wonted place;
With a haughty smile on the quivering lip
He looked that man in the face,
And drew himself up with a nameless pride,
And spoke with a nameless grace:

"*I* cling to a bucking waler!
Sink all intellectual pride,
And wait like a brainless cavalry sub
For a pig by a jungle side!
Out here I came with a nobler aim,
To rule, sir, and not to ride."

They turned from his words unheeding
To butcher their hapless game,
And the welkin rang with a coarse guffaw
As they called for that young man's name;
And that young man turned with a pitying look,
And went the way that he came.

In 1908, Durand published "Nadir Shah," an historical novel dealing with the last great Asiatic conqueror. After expelling the Afghans and the Turks from Persia, he had ascended the throne and then set out on a career of conquest.

The story begins after the battle of Karnal [A.D. 1739], in which Nadir had defeated Mohamed Shah of Delhi, who had sued for peace in person. The victor was sent a gift of slaves, among whom was a beautiful Rajput, Sitara, who first attracted the notice of Nadir and then his love. Throughout, she plays a leading part and is faithful to her lord, even unto death.

Nadir enters Delhi in triumph, but, owing to attacks on isolated bodies of his troops, he orders a massacre:

> and the fierce soldiery sprang forward to their work with a roar of joy. As the wild Uzbegs and Turkoman rode to and fro, slaying and burning and ravishing, a madness of terror came upon the townspeople. Men stabbed themselves, or set fire to their houses and perished in the flames. Women threw themselves into the wells, or leapt from the roofs and were dashed to pieces on the stones below.

The victor amassed a vast treasure and then marched back to the uplands of Persia. He lavished money on the fierce tribesmen of the passes, to secure the safety of his treasure, and enrolled many of them in his service.

Nadir Shah was never content, and after resting his force at Herat, and recruiting men to replace casualties, he marched off northwards to conquer Bokhara and Khiva. At this juncture Riza Khan, the heir-apparent, appeared on the scene. He closely resembled his father and his imperious nature resented reversion to a subordinate position after having enjoyed almost unlimited power during the absence of Nadir in India. The Shah was proud of his son, but yet somewhat jealous of his popularity among the soldiers.

Nadir had collected an enormous quantity of grain to serve as rations for his army, and this was carried on boats down the Oxus, while the army marched along the bank. The Amir of Bokhara made no attempt to fight the Persian army, but presented himself before Nadir, who accorded him fairly light terms.

The Khan of Khiva, on the other hand, marched south at the head of a large force with the intention of capturing the grain, upon which the very existence of the army depended. Nadir, upon hearing of the approach of the Turkoman, dispatched his son from Bokhara with a strong mounted force to reinforce the guard over the grain convoy, and gave him strict orders not to attempt to attack the enemy. However, he was lured into the desert and surrounded, and was rescued only just in time:

Nadir cantered down the front of his troops. The men forgot their fatigue in their eagerness, and a roar of cheering went with him down the line. The Turkoman answered with shouts of defiance, waving their spears. Then Nadir came back to the centre of the line, and raised his axe high above his head.

The fight was fierce while it lasted, but it did not last long. The first shock was met steadily enough, but a second line came pouring in through the openings left in the first, and after the second came a third. It topped the sand-hills like a mighty wave, hung a moment on the crest, and then poured over with irresistible weight, and down the slopes to the westward a broken sea of horsemen went rolling into the plain.

Nadir rescued his son, but reprimanded him so sternly that there was a breach between the two men, which interested officials were always increasing. Like many Oriental monarchs, Nadir knew that his son might conspire against him and became suspicious of him. Some months later an attempt was made to assassinate him by two Afghans, one of whom had been a member of his son's body-guard. Nadir inquired into the case carefully, and the evidence was so strong against his son, who would only deny that he knew nothing about the plot, that the furious monarch gave orders for him to be blinded, a sentence that was duly carried out.

Too late, Nadir realized his mistake and began to suffer from remorse. Hated by his subjects, he became more and more cruel until he was assassinated by members of his own staff, who feared for their own lives. Roused by the watchful Sitara, Nadir rushed on the assassins and died fighting to the end.

The last lines in the book run :

Ahmad Khan stood in the torch-light, his sword red with Persian blood, and looked down at the headless trunk of the great leader he had tried to save. Near it lay the Rajput girl, the dagger still clenched in her stiffening fingers, faithful to the end.

Ahmad Khan, it is to be noted, was the founder of the Kingdom of Afghanistan.

To sum up : " Nadir Shah " is full of masterly descrip-

tions of India, Afghanistan and Persia, permeated with the special atmosphere of each country. It is also a romance full of colour and action, each individual standing out and playing his part true to type. After reading it, pictures of marching armies, of stony desolate passes, of barbarous cruelty and of Oriental splendour are among the impressions that remain. It is an epitome of the Middle East some two centuries ago.

Durand's second essay at biography was the "Life of Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall." He knew him personally and officially, and was warmly attached to him, but brings out his restless, unsatisfied and sceptical character with complete impartiality. He was also acquainted with most of his contemporaries in India.

Lyall joined the Indian Civil Service and landed in India, in 1856, supported by an uncle at home, who had been Chairman of the Directors of the East India Company for some years. He, therefore, like Durand, had friends to greet him on his arrival and to help him in his career.

Although a thinker and a dreamer by nature, he faced the crisis of the Indian Mutiny with grim determination, displaying courage in more than one action, and receiving a mention in dispatches. Subsequently, when he returned to his post, he inflicted severe but entirely just penalties on the rebels.

His promotion was rapid, and so was the growth of his literary reputation. John Morley, at this period, was editor of the *Fortnightly*, and being much struck by his article on "Witchcraft," brought the brilliant young civilian to the notice of Lord Northbrook, who appointed him Home Secretary.

After holding this post for a short time, he was appointed Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana, where, as mentioned in Chapter V, Durand served under him and became the friend of his critical chief.

Lyall's next appointment was that of Foreign Secretary. Lord Lytton, aware that Lyall was a convinced Liberal in politics, was by no means anxious to make him his Foreign

Secretary, although he was attracted by his literary talents. He could not tolerate Sir Charles Aitchison's views, which were most distasteful to him, but he tried another official before finally deciding to appoint Lyall, who was, of course, aware of the exact position. Durand, who knew both men, makes the following penetrating comments :

> Lord Lytton was at times inclined to criticize Lyall as not sufficiently decided in his views, and to complain that he saw all round the questions which came before him rather than through them—that he would show every conceivable objection to every course proposed, but would not plainly advocate any other. The fact was that the two men were very dissimilar in temperament: the one clever and bold in his views, but impulsive, and apt at times to do rash things; the other equally clever, but by nature cautious and reflective, with "the Lyall habit of seeing both sides of a question," and with the extra incentive to caution supplied by experience and knowledge of India.[1]

Lyall took charge of the Foreign Office in the spring of 1878, and within a few months Shir Ali had received a Russian Mission at Kabul and had precipitated hostilities with Great Britain. Lyall disliked the strain which the war involved, but he was undoubtedly right in trying to avoid annexation by every possible means, and the result ultimately justified his views. He visited Kabul when negotiations with Abdur Rahman were beginning, and to this journey we owe *The Amir's Soliloquy*, which gives as much insight into the grim Amir's mind as anything Kipling has written. For me, it ranks highly, and I place it on a level with the *Old Pindaree*.

Lyall remained Foreign Secretary under Lytton, receiving the C.B. He also served under Lord Ripon, with whose political views he was in sympathy. After holding the post for four years, and receiving the K.C.B., he was promoted to be Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces and Oudh (now the United Provinces), a post he occupied with distinction, but which he found wearisome at times. Indeed, he was very glad when he

[1] "Life of Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall," p. 213.

left India for good and took up a membership of the Indian Council, which he held for fifteen years, enjoying the rare distinction of being reappointed for five years after the expiration of the normal period of ten years.

During these later years his literary reputation overshadowed his official position, although his knowledge of Indian and Central Asian politics was acknowledged to be most valuable by successive Secretaries of State. He was rewarded with honours including a Privy Councillorship, which both he and Durand were among the few Indian officials to receive.

Altogether Lyall spent a quarter of a century of crowded and varied activity in England, enjoying his well-earned honours as an official and writer. He had many friends. Among them was Lord Dufferin, who described him as "one of the most accomplished and delicate-minded spirits of the age."

Perhaps his deepest interest in life was the profound study of the Oriental mind, and I shall always treasure a charming letter which he wrote me upon reading a book ("The Glory of the Shia World"), in which I had attempted to write as a Persian. It contained the sentence: "Thanks to you, the Oriental mind is laid bare." No praise could have pleased me more, coming from the greatest living authority on the subject.

Durand's final summing up of his friend ran :

> It seems to me that among the men I have known there have been few of such rare qualities and charm, and not one who had the power of inspiring, in those who really knew him, a deeper trust and affection.[1]

Hardly had Durand published his "Life" of Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall, a man of the pen, than he was asked to undertake the biography of Field-Marshal Sir George White, a man of the sword. He hesitated for some time, as he felt that a soldier might perhaps perform the task more efficiently, but Lord Roberts having expressed a strong

[1] "Life of Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall," p. 458.

wish on the subject, he accepted, and the book was published in two volumes in 1915.

Few, if any, men were better equipped for it. He had known White, personally and officially, for a very long period. Like him, he had taken part in the Second Afghan War and the Third Burmese War. Of at least equal importance was the fact that he had twice visited South Africa, and had made a special study of the Ladysmith district in connexion with the operations. Durand's articles on South Africa, which first appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, were published under the title of "A Holiday in South Africa." This little volume gives a delightfully written and masterly account of the country at the time when the movement was in progress and approaching completion which resulted in the birth of a new nation.

Born in Ulster, a member of an old Protestant family, White grew up a man endowed with superb physique, but badly educated, and Durand brings out in an interesting manner how, under the stress of circumstances, as in the case of Lord Roberts, this serious disability was overcome, both men evolving a particularly "convincing" style.

White suffered from bad luck for many years. He served in India with his regiment during the Mutiny, but took no part in it, and there were few more discontented soldiers until, at the age of forty-four, he got his chance and made a splendid use of it.

It is interesting to note that he was a keen mountaineer and *shikari*, and this trained, if it did not actually give him, the extraordinary eye for country that stood him in such good stead throughout his career.

At the action of Chaharasia, White's future was assured when his military intuition and personal gallantry at one supreme moment enabled him to seize the pass through the range and to capture all the Afghan guns. The skilled *shikari* came out in his own words: "At another place, I borrowed a soldier's rifle and cleared a nest of them out by regularly stalking the leader like an ibex."

White rose to high command in the Third Burmese

War. The task of pacification entrusted to him was, as mentioned in Chapter XII, one of extreme difficulty, but White grasped the essential fact that, until the villagers could be protected, it was unjust to punish them for complicity with the dacoits. This feeling is expressed in a letter to Sir William Lockhart:

> The first duty of the conqueror is to protect the conquered. After leaving villagers at the mercy of dacoits, who take all they have, we reassert our power spasmodically, drive off the dacoits, and compensate the villagers by burning their villages.

After the pacification of Burma was successfully accomplished, White was appointed to the command in the frontier province of Baluchistan and then, through Roberts's strong recommendation, to the high post of Commander-in-Chief in India. During this period, Sir George White twice sent for me on my reaching Simla from Persia. He impressed me deeply with his knowledge of the Central Asian question, while his kindness and courtesy to a very junior officer were marked.

The great achievement, for which White will ever be remembered by his grateful countrymen, was the defence of Ladysmith. He arrived in Natal only just in time to take over command before hostilities broke out, and, rather against his better judgment, left a large part of his command in a dangerously isolated position and liable to be cut off. After an action at Talana, which only failed to achieve success through an unfortunate misunderstanding, the detached force retreated safely and rejoined the main body. But there was a disaster at Lombard's Kop, due primarily to a stampede among the mules of the mountain battery, during a night march undertaken to surprise the enemy, although it was also surmised that the Boers were informed about the movement. White felt the loss terribly and, with the chivalry that was so conspicuous in his nature, took all the blame upon his own shoulders.

The decision to hold Ladysmith was a great one; and

hold it he did, and thereby won immortal fame. Durand gives a vivid account of Buller's operations and also of the defence from a close study of the ground and from many conversations with local residents who had taken part in them. In fact, I do not know any account which is so well informed, so fair and so judicial.

After the publication of the biography, Durand wrote to a reviewer, who criticized its length, as follows:

> The first volume is, no doubt, a bit long, but I had two reasons for this. People interested in Lyall had pitched into me for not making sufficient use of his letters when I wrote his Life. I wished to be sure of giving plenty of White's. But secondly, I wanted to make use of White's Life in order to give a correct account of the Mutiny, and of our connexion with India, and of the position in Afghanistan and on the tribal frontier, and of other matters which seemed to me important, particularly just now.
>
> It is always a question how far the introduction of such matter adds to, or detracts from, the value of a biography. It is, of course, much easier to write a purely personal story, and *prima facie* it is more artistic; but after thinking over the question and consulting one or two people whose judgment I valued, it seemed to me better to take the other line. So, in the second volume as well as the first, though to a less extent, there is historical and descriptive matter—*e.g.* an account of the position in South Africa, and of Spanish feeling with regard to Gibraltar.

The *Spectator* ended a discriminating review with the following words:

> This is a book to read for encouragement and example. White's battles were small as we reckon battles to-day; but through the darkness he always saw light; he was always moving forwards in knowledge and virtue; and at a crisis in the nation's history he absolutely refused to despair.

"The Thirteenth Hussars in the Great War" was the last book that Durand published, and it gave him great pleasure, owing to his love of the sword. It far transcends the ordinary record of regimental achievement, two of the chapters, on cavalry and the later campaign in Mesopotamia, being of permanent value.

The regiment was raised in 1715, and a sketch is given of its achievements in the Peninsula and the Crimea, where it took part in the immortal charge of the Light Brigade. When the Great War broke out, it was stationed at Meerut and was sent to France, but it arrived at the end of 1914, too late to take part in the retreat from Mons, and was barred by trench warfare from all chances of distinction. This unsatisfactory state of affairs continued for over a year, and officers and men naturally hailed with enthusiasm the order to proceed to Mesopotamia, where cavalry was as valuable as it was useless in France during the many years of immobility.

The regiment took part in Sir Stanley Maude's triumphant advance on Baghdad, and its most brilliant episode in this campaign was at Lajj, in March, 1917, where it charged what were apparently some groups of Turks, but which actually proved to be bodies of infantry concealed in trenches and provided with machine guns and artillery.

The leading squadron in this modern Balaclava was led by gallant Captain Eve, who fell fighting at the head of his men—the finest death a soldier can wish for. This charge was unsuccessful, but Durand points out that its losses were more than double those of their predecessors in the charge of the Light Brigade. It was not war in the modern sense of the word. As *The Times* reviewer aptly put it, "it showed the spirit but not the manner in which mounted men should act."

Eighteen months later, trained by experience, the regiment galloped to the foot of aposition, dismounted, and stormed it, capturing more than seven hundred prisoners. This was cavalry action seen at its best and gave great satisfaction to all ranks.

Durand made an excellent use of diaries and letters from all ranks, with the result that the book is a thoroughly human document; the illustrations are beautiful. It was received with enthusiasm by members of the regiment and by parents and relations of the fallen. Among the many letters, one written by a parent ran:

I would not have a word altered, slips by privates and the rest give it a never ceasing charm. It is a record of noble courage and of pride in the regiment—a great book written by a grand man.

The foregoing account tends to prove that Durand possessed considerable literary gifts, covering a wide range. Of his poems, *Attar Singh* should live, and it is a pity that he did not write more on similar lines. His descriptions of Afghanistan, its scenery and its people, are perhaps the best that have ever been penned. Throughout his writings, the dominant notes are sincerity, loyalty and patriotism, combined with remarkable accuracy and an entire absence of writing for mere effect.

CHAPTER XXV

THE CLOSING YEARS

Life is mostly froth and bubble;
Two things stand as stone:
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own.—LINDSAY GORDON.

DURAND lived for eighteen years after his return home, and, as the previous chapter shows, he wielded his pen with good effect throughout. He also watched public affairs closely.

The Anglo-Russian Convention, by the terms of which the two Powers settled their differences in Asia, interested him intensely since, more than any other official, he had made such a settlement possible by the delimitation of the northern boundaries of Afghanistan. In March, 1908, he writes:

> There was a discussion in the House of Lords both about the Russian Convention and about the North-West Frontier of India. Curiously enough both turned more or less on the "Durand Line," Lord Crewe having been coached by the Foreign Office to the effect that I had proposed the line dividing Persia in one of my dispatches. It was an ingenious use of a dispatch advocating roads and railways and consular posts, the idea being to run me in as the suggester of the Convention surrender, which was dead against my views and proposals. I have written to Tyrrell [1] for a copy of my dispatch, but shall probably be too late to do anything.

When the matter was explained to Sir Edward Grey, he gave permission to Durand to correct the error that puzzled a great many people who had never heard of a "Durand Line" in Persia.

[1] Sir William Tyrrell, now Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

In 1909 Durand decided to stand for Parliament. At first he thought of Falmouth, as he was known in the neighbourhood, but he received an invitation to stand for Plymouth as joint candidate with Mr. Waldorf (now Viscount) Astor. The seat had been gained by the Liberals with a majority of about 2,500 votes at the great defeat of the Conservatives in 1906.

His diary runs :

On June 1st I went down to Plymouth and was passed by the Conservative Executive Committee. It was a funny proceeding, and made me feel rather like a schoolboy up for a *viva voce* examination. There were a dozen men in a small room, among whom I was given a seat and asked to explain my views in an informal speech. Then I was sent out of the room and went up to the Hoe for a few minutes. Returning to the house where I was staying, I received a telephone message asking me to go down to the Committee again, and was then informed that I was unanimously selected to fight the constituency. On the 8th, I returned to London, and went through the same thing with a Council of fifty or so; and then, after dinner, met the general body of five or six hundred and made them a set speech which was very well received.

Durand took a house at Plymouth and set to work to canvass :

On 7th August, I did my first morning's visiting. Wandered about the Vintry Ward, and shook hands with many scores of fishermen and shopkeepers, notable men among them being a big publican and a potato dealer. In the afternoon, visits again. No one at all striking except an ancient Radical, who accused the British aristocracy of having stopped Sunday closing. Anyone who did this was "a blackguard."

On another occasion—

One bellicose gentleman, who had been served with an objection paper, came down from upstairs saying very loudly that he was "going to knock our bloody heads off." He thought better of it when he got down, but was vehement for voting against anyone who sent him an objection paper.

Durand was deeply interested in the chance given him for studying the life of the people :

There is a great difference in workmen's houses. Some are dirty and untidy with broken glass and bell, paint peeling off, bare boards in passage, and ragged mat or none at all. In such cases the women are slatternly and the children unwashed. The majority are clean and tidy, with well washed fronts and passages ; good mats and oilcloth in passages ; sometimes flowers. Women often pretty and well dressed ; almost all civil and pleasant in manner. The vast majority think only of what they can get themselves from a vote, which is, after all, only natural.

At the end of the year, an entry runs :

A merry meeting with some interruptions, but fairly good tempered. One man got me rather. I was rubbing in facts against theories and prophecies, and came to Germany. "Now take Germany. What are the facts?" "They eats dawgs," and a roar of laughter.

Just before the voting Durand sums up :

Jo has done wonders, especially with the ladies. Between us, we have paid ten thousand visits. If we can trust to reports, we have not a minority in a single ward.

But alas ! although the Liberal majority was reduced from 2,367 to 311, Durand and Astor failed to be elected. He told me that he lost many of the few hundred votes that lay between him and success by advocating the principles of National Service. He attended a meeting on the subject at which Sir George White spoke, although he had been strongly advised to absent himself from Plymouth on the day. As a result of his advocacy, many people were finally won over to the cause which Lord Roberts spent the closing years of his life in urging on his fellow-countrymen, but Durand lost his chance of getting into Parliament.

One way or another, the election had cost Durand £2,000, and he wisely decided that he could not afford to stand again, although strongly pressed to do so by the



Photo: London Stereoscopic Co.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR MORTIMER DURAND, P.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.
(Wearing the robes of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.)

Conservatives of Plymouth, who won both seats in the next election.

He took a house in Montagu Square and continued his various activities. His life was, however, saddened by the constant ill-health of Lady Durand, who died in the spring of 1913. She had been a devoted wife and mother and, although of a retiring disposition, had been a staunch friend to those she liked.

Durand was deeply affected by his loss and made a second journey to South Africa. He wrote to a friend from off Finisterre :

> My wife had suffered so long that the end was unexpected, though I had always wondered how she could stand the constant wear of pain and sleepless nights. Now all pain is over for her, and I try to keep this thought always uppermost. I have had nearly forty years of a companionship of which I was never worthy.

When the Great War broke out Durand was sixty-four. He had also held very high posts. As a consequence it was found difficult to employ him at first, and his offer to serve with Indian troops in any capacity was not accepted. In a letter he refers to the post he was ultimately given :

> In 1916 I was suddenly summoned by Mr. Long to take charge of the Badge Committee, whose duty was to check the exemptions from service granted in certain cases, and to fill the gaps in the ranks, without unduly limiting the supply of munitions. I learnt then how keen was the rivalry between the Munitions Department and the War Office. I reported in September that a million of men of military age were exempted by the Munitions Department and that the issue of badges was going on at such a rate as to make it impossible for the Committee to carry out its duties as laid down by the Cabinet. I recommended therefore that the Government should issue a definite ruling to the effect that young men of twenty-five and under were primarily wanted in the ranks, and should authorize the Committee to act upon this ruling. The urgent need of men in the ranks was then severely felt. The only result of this recommendation was that a new Committee was appointed under the name of the Man-Power Board, without sufficient power to check the issue of badges,

which went on merrily as before. The want of men was so felt in the summer of 1917 as to endanger the safety of the Channel ports and the issue of the War.

It appears that the Ministry of Munitions decided to manufacture twenty-five per cent. more munitions than the naval and military authorities required, and that the fighting man-power was heavily drawn on for the purpose. The question was one of extreme difficulty, but the true position was undoubtedly laid down by Durand, who thereby rendered an important service to the State. It is a great pity that he could not have raised it in Parliament.

Mr. W. H. Stoker, K.C., who was associated with Durand on another Committee that examined claims for exemption, wrote of him:

> He combined strength, restraint, sound judgment and the judicial mind in a marked degree, all exercised with a modesty and sweetness of disposition, which it is easier to feel than to do adequate justice to in words.

In addition to these official duties, Durand wrote the sections on *Chaldea* and *Persia* for "*The Times* History of the War." He also wrote the following lines in memory of his nephew, Captain Hugh Travers:

HIS CHANCE—1914

Always cheery and loyal and keen,
 And never a slant of luck,
Egypt, Afridiland, Magersfontein,
 A wound and a fever, and still in the ruck.
Never a cross for the hard-saved gun,
Never a line in a long dispatch,
He laughed and told us what others had done,
 And the ball in the shoulder "was only a scratch."
Then the English sailed for the fields of France,
 Gladly the regiment welcomed him back,
And we said, "Now surely he will get his chance,
 It can't be unending, the run on the black."

They came at our lines in the darkness and rain,
 Thousand on thousand against our few,
And the fields in the open were heaped with the slain,
 But the mass surged onward, and over, and through.
Sullenly fighting the men went back
 Swamped not beaten, shooting to kill,
Then a waver and writhe in the tortured attack
 As our guns got the range from the slope of the hill.

"Come along, men! They're breaking. Now give them the steel."
 He was first up himself as the mass went about,
And cheering and stabbing they came at his heel,
 And through the lost trenches they poured with the rout.
He was missing that night, though they searched for him long.
 In the morning they found him, a smile in his eyes.
Dead. But for England. If life did him wrong,
 Death has brought him his guerdon. In Honour he lies.

It remains to add that Durand's son served through the Great War, on the staff or in command of the 9th Lancers, and won the Distinguished Service Order. Miss Durand worked at a hospital for Belgian soldiers in London; and later was in charge of a branch of the Plymouth Loan Hospital Supply Depot.

The long years of strain during the War told on Durand, but he kept on working, living for the greater part of the year at Penmain House, Rock, a small property he purchased in Cornwall, but spending some months in London.

At Rock he passed many happy days, rejoicing in the possession of a few acres of English soil and enjoying long tramps on the cliffs as well as the golf. The following lines express his feelings:

1917

The long-last day of a blue July,
 The soft air cleared by the northerly breeze,
And away there under the western sky
 The gleaming sapphire of white-capped seas.

A sun-kissed nook on the lee of the hill,
Where the sand-grass shimmers and wild flowers bloom ;
In the heart of the world there is happiness still,
The fates weave ever some gold in the loom.

And it's good to remember when dark days mock,
And the wild wind smites on the shuddering pane ;
There will yet be a summer in Cornish Rock,
And you'll come . . . and the world will be golden again.

The critical days that followed the German "break through," in the spring of 1918, inspired Durand to write stirring verses, instinct with the martial spirit of the writer:

ENGLAND

Our best are dying in field and flood,
In our ears is the roar of a murderous hate,
On the wings of the night comes a terror of blood,
Was England ever so great ?
She was great in the days that are gone, we know,
When Drake was singeing the mad king's beard,
When Marlborough smote for her blow on blow,
When straight at the heart of his far-sought foe
Our passionate Nelson steered ;
When the worn red line stood, doggèd and still,
Facing the Conqueror's desperate stroke,
And over the brow of the gun-swept hill
The surge of his squadrons eddied and broke.
Aye, many a day when our Englishmen died,
England had honour, and place for her pride.
But the land was touched by a poisonous breath,
And her arm waxed faint, and her heart grew cold,
And they laughed in their hate : "She is sick unto death,
She is ripe for our spoiling, the hoarder of gold."
And now ? Now before them she stands in the strait,
The hope of the nations, high foeman of wrong.
Unfearing, she takes up the challenge of fate,
The cold heart has kindled, the faint arm is strong.
And the gleam of her legions has girdled the earth,
As the lightning that flashes from East unto West.

*Published in *Land & Water*, March, 28, 1918.

At the sound of her voice they have leapt to their birth,
And the spoiler shall rue ere their banners have rest.
Shall we fail, shall we doubt her? She stands for the right,
She was never so mighty, for never so true.
Though in blood and in woe we must win to the light,
Men and women of England, heads up and go through.

I last saw Durand in the summer of 1923. I was going to America and spent a few hours with him. He struck me as much aged, and I recollect he quoted Lindsay Gordon's verse, which I have given as the motto to this chapter, and expressed his warm admiration for the sentiments it contained. In the autumn he had a very serious illness, but spent the winter in the South of France and returned home apparently better. In the spring of 1924 he had a stroke, from which he never recovered, and died on Whitsunday, June 8, at Boldon, Minehead, where this great public servant was buried.

* * * * *

The fine old Roman adage, *noscitur a sociis*, still stands, and so, by way of conclusion to this work, I give the considered opinions of Lord Roberts, of Lord Dufferin, and of Lord Lansdowne under whom Durand served, and who knew him intimately. Countess Roberts writes:

My father greatly valued his friendship with Sir Mortimer Durand. They were first associated in the Second Afghan War, and they came together again during the years my father was Commander-in-Chief in India when, as a Member of the Viceroy's Council, much of his work, especially in relation to the frontier, in dealings with the Amir of Afghanistan, and in the initiation of the Imperial Service Troops, brought him into close touch with Sir Mortimer, who was then Foreign Secretary. Sir Mortimer used to say that it was his lifelong regret that his father had not wished him to be a soldier, and I know my father felt that his soldierly instincts gave him an unusually clear grasp of military problems and policy.

My father hoped to see Sir Mortimer holding high office in the Government of India as Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and as a Member of Council, and when, in 1894, he was selected

to be British Minister at Tehran, he was apprehensive that the proposal would not be to his advantage. Apart from the personal point of view, he deplored the loss to India, where he considered Sir Mortimer's knowledge of the various races and many intricate problems, and his sound judgment on frontier policy, were greatly needed. He wrote to urge his careful consideration of these matters before accepting the post, and pleaded his affection for "so old and valued a friend" in writing thus frankly. These words, I think, give the measure of the esteem in which he held Sir Mortimer Durand.

On page 178 I have already given a convincing proof of the high esteem in which Lord Dufferin held Durand. A second opinion of his, as expressed in a letter to Lord Cross, at that time Secretary of State for India, runs:

As for Durand, he is about the best Civil Servant that we have, and certainly the loftiest-minded man I have met in India—brave, cool, proud, absolutely disinterested, and a perfect paragon as regards his personal character, very industrious, and with a tremendous sense of the obligations and of the dignity which should attach to an English gentleman.

Finally, we have the opinion of Lord Lansdowne, under whom Durand served in India and also as Ambassador at Madrid and at Washington:

I like to recall that, during my five years in India, not a few of the men on whom I had to rely for official assistance became my intimate friends. Among these the name of Mortimer Durand occurs prominently to my mind. He was Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department, of which the Viceroy himself has charge.

Durand and I took kindly to one another from the first. It was impossible to know him, either in private or official life, without being attracted to him. His thorough knowledge of men and things, his absolute sincerity, and the shrewdness of his judgment, made him the best of companions. He understood and was understood by Indians of all sorts and descriptions. His fine manner, courteous and dignified, impressed them, and I doubt whether any member of the Civil Service was more looked up to by the representatives of the many races with whom the Foreign Department

is concerned. His instincts were those of a soldier; he used to say that he was intended by Providence to be a soldier, and no questions interested him more than the great frontier problems. History tells of the distinction with which he acquitted himself of the difficult task which was entrusted to him, when, in 1893, he was sent to negotiate an Agreement with the Amir of Afghanistan.

This book is now completed, and in it, to the best of my ability, I have drawn the portrait of a great English gentleman and official, with its lights and shades. Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote a verse that exactly describes Durand, and thus forms a fit ending to this biography:

A time like this demands
Great hearts, strong minds, true faith and willing hands:
Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honour, men who will not lie.

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